PAPERS FROM PICARDY

BY TWO CHAPLAINS

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PAPERS FROM PICARDY

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BY TWO CHAPLAINS

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TO

CERTAIN OF OUR FRIENDS

WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR ENGLAND

IN REVERENT AFFECTION

AND TO

THE PROSPECT OF THE NEW ENGLAND

FOR THE HOPE OF WHICH

THEY DIED

PREFACE

THESE papers owe their title to the fact that they were written, for the most part, during the fighting on the Somme in the summer and autumn of 1916. They are, however, the result of experience gained not only there but in other parts of France, in Flanders, and in a soldiers' hospital at home.

We do not pretend to have written without preconceived ideas. No one who has any settled opinions can seriously make that claim. We write as commissioned officers in the Church of Christ, and are to this extent prejudiced that we have an unshakeable conviction that Christ alone holds the key to the social and individual problems which the war is forcing on our notice. We have, however, sincerely tried to see facts as they really are, and to record them without

any effort to twist them to suit our theories. If anywhere in these pages we have seemed to state our deductions as though they were incontestable, let the difficulties of writing and revising under the conditions of active service be our explanation and excuse. That such is not our object the many question marks with which these pages are so plentifully besprinkled should afford sufficient evidence. Our purpose throughout has been at all costs to state the truth so far as we have been able to see it, and not so much to offer clear-cut answers and ready-made solutions as to enlist your sympathy and to stir your thought.

T. W. P.
G. G.

B. E. F., *November* 1916.

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PART I

BY

T. W. PYM

FIRST PAPER

SOME CONSIDERATIONS AS TO THE VARYING EFFECTS OF WAR ON THE INDIVIDUAL

PICARDY and the Somme will stand for all time in the history of England as symbols of her children's valour. My admiration and affection for our men is unending, but others have told and are telling, better than I can hope to unfold, the tale of their glory. Will you, for once, read a book which nearly takes all this for granted? There are doubtless others besides myself who care for them enough to be willing to go deeper than the surface brightness of their great achievements and their long endurance — to consider those of their virtues not popularly acclaimed. And more than this. For their sake, for the sake of the England of the future, *their* England as it should be by right, some of us want to examine dispassionately and bring to general notice tendencies and influences of the times which, if

disregarded, will not make for our men's truest happiness when they return, nor for the highest welfare of the England that is to be.

By going to the wars, by the offer of themselves in life or death, these men have surrendered themselves to the powerful and, as many hold, evil forces which war brings in its train—of which death may well be considered the least. Some of these influences it is the purpose of these papers to define and estimate in their effect on character and life ; but there are reasons why such a definition and such an estimate are beset with difficulties, for the war has produced a rare crop of amateur psychologists. People who before had no particular reason to study the effect, upon themselves or others, of the varied experiences of ordinary life, now meditate and prophesy upon the mental and moral ' effects ' of the world's chaos on classes or on individuals. If the war has served no other useful purpose, it has at any rate harvested the common-sense of Daylight Saving and has stimulated torpid imaginations. So far so good ; that people who did not think much have started to think more is satisfactory, but the result of their reflections is sometimes

of little practical use in assessing the amount of change that has been wrought. Men and women, of whatever class, have been drawn together; common motives have linked them in work, vital needs have stripped them of reserve. The newly fledged psychologist, blinking his newly opened eyes, sees in his fellows qualities and tendencies, virtues or vices which he had not hitherto observed: the roué is brave, the mechanic is intelligent, the duchess is human, and the Socialist patriotic; the private soldier is heroic and yet cute—he can die or he can lie. The man whose eyes have up till now been always closed thinks that all these facts are new and, staggered by the transformations, as he thinks, which war has evolved, he lumps his observations together, classifies his 'effects,' and breaks into song about the future of the State, of politics, or of the Church. He might just as well go to Vesuvius after an eruption and comment on the alterations in the crater, which hitherto he had only known by photographs taken before the eruption from the other side and studied by him upside down; as to change, any correct inferences that he might draw from a subsequent

visit to the actual spot would arise from good fortune rather than good sense. There is little of fortune, and still less of sense, in the observations of some of those who have lately gone into the prophesying business, and this is particularly true of their deductions from what they think they see in the soldier. They forget that what is strangely new to the observer is not of necessity a new growth in the observed; they have never read the back numbers of the book they are now studying.

It is not only by those who now open their eyes for the first time that we are in danger of being misled, but also by those who, having for long used their eyesight in one direction only, and perhaps too well, have developed a permanent squint. Many people look to the war to confirm all their pre-war ideas and do not in the least realise that they are doing so. The Socialist has this mental squint—'I told you so,' he mutters: 'State Control.' The agnostic squints badly—'I 've never met a man who 'd been in trenches and remained a believer.' Many a devoted priest can only see 'the immense revival of the religious sense in the face of suffering,' 'the

recognition of God's wrath,' and so forth. They are like the young man who, from boyhood's breakfasts onwards, has heard his father crumpling the pages of the same newspaper, wallowing in the shallows of its political bias, and spluttering out over toast and marmalade that such and such a Cabinet Minister ought to be shot. In nine cases out of ten the son goes out into the world unconsciously eager to accept, as true evidence, only those occurrences which coincide with prejudices thus inherited or developed. A severe jolt may be the means of preserving to him intellectual honesty and an open mind; but if there is no jolt, the more intelligent he is the more will he employ his brains to explain and justify rationally that which by no process of reasoning he has already accepted as part of his mental equipment. This habit of mind is, I believe, scientifically termed 'dissociation,' and it operates, we are told, to a greater or less degree in all human thought, not excepting that of philosophers; even where consciously detected by its victim it cannot be wholly counteracted.

These then are the two difficulties that beset any one who attempts to convey an impression

of the marks that Active Service is leaving upon his friends : (1) To avoid jumping to the conclusion that others are really changing or developing, when perhaps only his own previous misunderstanding of them is being removed. (2) To remember that by guarding against prejudice and bias in his own case, and denouncing it in others, he does not automatically become himself impartial. Nor does the writer of these papers admit these difficulties in order to display his own immunity from the taint, but rather, painfully aware of his infection with the disease, to disarm criticism in advance. If there is anything about which I thought I knew something before the war, it was the character, mode of thought, the capacity for both good and evil in the young man of the day. It had been my joy to use such knowledge as I thought I had in the attempt to help him in more than one class of life. Much that I have seen in him during the past two years, much that *might* be due to his experience at the front, has seemed to me to be merely normal. It would be impossible to say exactly how much of change in him is due to the war. I do not know. In particular cases can

be noted undoubted changes, and these may indicate a more widespread effect than one could dare assume. Where I have been tempted in the following pages to say that 'such and such an impression has been stamped,' that 'so and so will follow,' I do not mean to dogmatise. Always I have this reservation—my own limitations—in mind. Let the reader form his own conclusions. For again I admit that I have the mental squint of my kind. I *wanted* to see the war as a purging influence. I *believed*, and still believe, that suffering should raise and not lower. I *hoped* that no man would 'live through' and return home anything but a better citizen—better not only by reason of past achievement, but in potentiality for the future. Yet I have tried to free these pages from the bias of this desire, this faith and hope; not because of an excessive fear that these emotions may not find fulfilment, but simply that they should not influence the faithful recorder. Religion, if it be true, does not need to be bolstered up with specially selected material. I believe that good will triumph over evil. My experience in these months of war has strengthened, not lessened, my

faith in the reality and power of the Spirit of God, but I have honestly tried here not to press an argument to support such beliefs. We are concerned with a statement, not an argument. In token of sincerity in this respect we will start with an incident of some weeks ago, which I have leave to repeat in outline ; it could so easily be twisted, with a little imagination, to serve as evidence in a court of special pleading, but we will try and assess it at its probable value in fact.

. . . . . .

'I 'd never thought of that word before, sir ; it had never struck me. But as I marched along that road I couldn't get it out of my mind ; it kept coming back. It 's there now.'

The road was that described elsewhere ending in the 'Coin de Mort,' flanked by its blazing poppies—'Dead man's Corner'—Flower of Sleep. The speaker was a sergeant in a certain city battalion. In the early days he had thrown up a very good position, left his mother alone, and joined after making over to her his bank-balance and savings, so that she might not be compelled in any way to change her mode of living. The word which he had mentioned was 'Anguish.'

'Yes,' I said, 'one doesn't often hear it. In fact, in my mind it has only one connection.' I pointed to a small unframed picture on my wall, 'Head of the Christ' after Leonardo da Vinci. It came to me originally as a Christmas card, and since then in this wandering life is always the first thing to go up in a new billet and the last thing to be taken down on leaving. It goes with me sometimes to the various places where hastily arranged services are held, and helps to form a chancel. It brings there, to me at any rate, something of the atmosphere which it is not always easy to find in barn or cellar. The sergeant went over to it and studied it. 'Yes, I thought just the same; now that 's funny, isn't it!'

He was not a church-goer at home or here, 'not religious' as he put it. He happened to be in my room because a friend of mine had found him in a distracted frame of mind and had managed to persuade him that I might be of use. And so I was in the one rôle which is always possible, the rôle of listener. Like countless others in this life, he wanted an outlet; discipline kept him from his officers, as shy pride would

have kept him from me unless he had been brought; he couldn't unburden himself to his comrades, for that, he felt, would be bad for moral; he was suffering too much. His great friend, a mere boy much younger than himself, whom he loved devotedly, had last been seen hanging limp on the German wire like fly on string. For the company had had two 'shows' while the sergeant was on leave, one defensive and the other in attack, and had come out of them no company at all. And he had not been with them—there was pain. Why live when they had gone, the men with whom he had shared enlistment, training, and exile? Why had he ever served with them at all if he might not serve to the end? And while in England he had visited that other home and learned how great was the love there for the boy. He had promised to be father and brother to him and to do much for him—too late; if he had been on the spot things might have gone differently. Here was anguish! How could he write home? What could he say?

No one could have heard him talk and doubted that in the cry of his soul—'This is what anguish

means '—he was suffering the acutest heartache he had ever known, and was realising it as such. There was nothing of the dumb unrecognising suffering which is even more pathetic ; his hurt was so intense as to startle him into self-consciousness. And just because he could see himself as a suffering being, he saw for a time the suffering Christ as well. An understanding of the Passion and the Atonement, the Great Love and the Great Sacrifice, flashed upon him ; for a time only, because such impressions are not lasting out here and such sorrows pass away. Other anxieties will distract, other suffering will be felt, there will be other people to care for. The scar will of course remain—the remembrance of what anguish was ; and if all this had happened during his first month in the country, and then he had been wounded and gone home for good, *Active Service would for ever after have meant just that one grief for him and nothing else.*

If any one who has received at regular intervals intimate and perfectly honest letters from any one near the front line will take the trouble now to re-read them in the order in which they were sent, he will see how great is the difference. First

impressions, here more even than elsewhere, go deepest. Horrors shock a man because they are unusual, rather than because they are horrible ; when they become a common experience they do not necessarily become less horrid, but they no longer shock ; this is to say, they do not, by a merciful providence, create as deep a consciously felt impression the hundredth time as they did the first. I have seen much horror and met much tragedy in this country, but I could not write about it, I do not feel about it now as I did at first. It is not necessarily that people become callous ; it is rather that what first outraged their emotions has had to be accepted as ordinary life ; those upon whose emotions, through fear or anxiety, too great a strain has been placed have broken down and gone away ; the vast majority who remain accept, as normal, conditions and experiences which they know at bottom to be grotesquely unnatural.

So it may be with that which we call Religious Experience under war conditions. Abnormal occurrences set a man adrift from the ordinary channels of explanation and consolement. He discovers in religion something which he never

before felt conscious of needing or capable of understanding. In that state of mind religion steadies and comforts him. Had he in the middle of a normal life at home experienced a similar shock of sorrow as an isolated event, the effect of the remedy afforded by religion would live on just as—if not just because—the experience which had called it forth stood out in the memory as unique. But in warfare so protracted as this human nature has time to adapt itself to such an extent that the once abnormal becomes, in time, the ordinary. Such an adaptation is 'natural,' unconscious, automatic; no remedy produces it; it just *happens*; and, generally speaking, the religious sense or the Christian Faith have no part in it; and, after many months of active service, a religion which was once a welcome refuge to outraged emotions may come to be regarded as an intrusion which cannot now be justified. It may even be treated more slightingly—much as a man will despise himself for ducking at the sound of his first bullet nine months ago. That is to put the case at its worst, from the point of view of those who have sincerely at heart the coming of the Kingdom of God in the

world. It is not pessimistic, but we *must* be disillusioned. There are far too many flamboyant assertions that war has turned man to God; such assumptions become blasphemous when they add that the Almighty stage-managed the war with this particular end in view. Our ground for hopefulness should be rather the opportunity which will remain after the war. To real enthusiasm such opportunity ahead is an infinitely keener spur than past achievement—the thought of what the war may enable us to do rather than of what the war has done for us already.

The opinion of 'effect' as stated, even supposing it to be well formed, is a view of the least hopeful aspect and is not intended as a general prophecy. No man can look even once and briefly to the Anguish of Christ as an explanation or palliation of his own, and remain the same; the old indifference must be weakened in its fortifications. Any man must be, however unconscious of the fact, a better man for having, even once, turned to God in an agony of fear, remorse, or sorrow. And with many this is not unconscious; often it underlies the utterance of

that password into any soldier's conversation—'It makes a man think, this here.' He does not understand God any more than he understands himself; he could not work it all out here and now even if he had some one to help him to do so. But there is a possibility there which did not exist before. And in some cases—they are, I believe, comparatively few—a man has so found God.

But the unreasoning optimists on the Christian side had best remember that for all of these people the expected revival of religion will not be automatic; good will not slide out of evil like mince out of a machine.

SECOND PAPER

A COMMENTARY ON THE SOLDIER'S ATTITUDE TO WAR

A PECULIARLY loathsome day in November was drawing to a close; the weather, of course, was bad, the cold bitter, the trenches deep in muddy glue. German shelling and sniping had added a mental discomfort, and there had been casualties. Somewhere about tea-time a setting sun, cold and grim, flickered for a few minutes over a black sky and a scene of desolation that only Bairnsfather's pencil could reproduce. A malicious wind heralded the approach of night as two private soldiers sat down on the fire-step over the remains of what had once been a brazier. They were too tired to say much, and then suddenly from one of them came the remark: 'All points to 'appiness, don't it, Jim?'

The cheerfulness which in this form is such a peculiar characteristic of the British soldier that

it has become proverbial, and needs to-day no further illustration, yet never ceases to amaze. The unconsciousness of it is the really heroic thing; they do not know, they do not even think how patient they are; they do not in the least realise, as they 'stick it out' month after month, that their cheerful persistence is, *in this protracted form*, not only foreign to their previous character, but indeed a miracle, to this extent, in human nature at all. This persistence is the same, only more self-conscious, with the young officer—self-conscious because it is in a sense conventional; class-training demands it of him, and Army form requires him to set an example of optimistic equanimity. But there is often much more behind; living under the conditions described above they often say: 'You 've absolutely *got* to be cheery or you 'd go under. You simply can't afford to be anything else.' Even when winter is doing its very worst the cheerful attitude is only more marked amongst officers, and with the men there is in bad times less grousing in the trenches and always more song on the march.

Wonderful though this has been, there has

appeared, many think, one disadvantage arising out of the courageous cheerfulness of all ranks; that has been the effect of their letters home. Any one who has done much censoring of letters knows how most of the men conceal the discomfort of their lives, the unspeakable sights around them, and the risks they run—referring to the latter in a sufficiently flippant manner to suggest that they are but a distant concern of their own. There are, of course, exceptions: when a man is having a fairly easy time he will be more likely to grouse in his letters, and the terrifying effect of shell-fire and the scenes of carnage in and around Rouen or Havre have produced the most highly descriptive correspondence of the war. With officers the same effort at concealment is absolutely universal. Wife and mother simply must not be allowed to be worried and anxious about their loved ones more than can be avoided. 'Going home on leave? If you see my people tell them I 'm first-rate, having the time of my life.' It is also one of the rules of convention and refinement that nasty things must be kept from the women; they must not know what a battle is really like; they must be saved from

any appreciation of the worst horrors of war. A Territorial private whom I know went home after nine months of very active service. 'And do you mean to say you have really seen a trench?' said his aunt. A devoted mother under similar circumstances said to her officer-son: 'Fancy that you 've heard enough bullets close enough to be able to describe what they sound like!' Often, of course, the opposite occurs, and people at home picture their friends in the midst of hardship and pressing dangers when they are having, if anything, rather a pleasant time. But on the whole such remarks as those which I have quoted, incredibly foolish though they sound, are fairly typical and not really so foolish when you come to consider the epistolary pap on which the speakers had been fed. While such ignorance among friends and relations redounds everlastingly to the honour of the soldier who has fostered it, it is nevertheless a disadvantage. In the first year of the war it had its share in blinding the public to the immensity of the struggle, to the horrors of war as it would be in England if it came there, and to the strength and determination of the enemy. It also disguised the true

nature of war itself. Humility, consideration for others, good-humoured belittlement of suffering or horror are admirable in their way, but war must not be allowed to masquerade as tolerable, enjoyable, and glorious when it is chiefly cruel and degrading. In spite of letters from the front war's true aspect is gradually being laid bare in all its ghastliness, but one wonders when the Press of the country will give it its right emphasis; perhaps not until war-correspondents are chosen from the ranks of serving soldiers and—putting wife or mother out of consideration—permit themselves in the interests of humanity to describe things whole. Meanwhile the unfailing cheerfulness of our soldiers remains in itself a thing of joy and is, one may be certain, a war development that will live on. In itself patient endurance of hardship and adversity was not created by the war; that has merely trained and stiffened what was always there and brought it to a higher pitch.

The same light-heartedness affects the soldier's attitude to the enemy. Speaking of the English non-commissioned officer and man, I am prepared to maintain against any one that they bear little

ill-will. Certainly the hardest veteran could not accuse them of lack of keenness to win the war and to win it by killing Germans; that is the business they are out for, their whole lives for months have been concentrated on nothing else; it has become their natural existence. But there it ends, and after they get home again they will be found to hate a German, as such, less than they will hate war itself and the people in all countries who make for war and make out of war. Their attitude on the subject is indicated in many ways, chiefly by such remarks as these, made often enough within a hundred yards of the enemy: 'Well, I 'spect Fritz wants to get back to blighty and 'is wife and kiddies as much as us chaps,' or 'It 's queer-like trying to knock out a chap as you 've never seen.' Their treatment of prisoners points the same way; when unwounded they are regarded as objects of merriment quite free from malice; our men stand round the cage and toss over cigarettes, partly out of kindness of heart, partly as they would throw buns to bears at the Zoo—for the sheer fun of it, to see whether the prize will be caught or dropped and who will get it. I once passed some

Germans being marched down the road; an infantryman, formerly a mechanic, was with me; his only comment was: 'They're glad enough to be getting out of it, and I don't blame them.' There are, of course, many exceptions, and that spirit is not universal, though common enough to be quite typical. No one finds it easy to love his enemies, but people at home who empurple fatly with hatred against the Germans—while calling *themselves* Christians—should blush, if they can still produce a blush, at the example set them by men fighting cleanly and dying bravely on *their* behalf. With the officers the attitude varies; but in their mouths the German is rarely described as 'Fritz'—the Christian name—but usually as 'the Hun' or 'the Boche.' This again is partly conventional; it's not exactly good form to stand up for the Boche, especially if the speaker or any one else present is known to have lost brother or father at German hands. In part, too, such a designation is an attempt, by artificial means, to stimulate keenness in the speaker or others for a business that nobody likes, which however, to be brought to a successful issue, must be carried on with

enthusiasm. All the same, I don't believe that the General who is 'dying to get within range of Cologne Cathedral' would really choose it as a target except for proved military necessity. The attitude of personal antagonism to the enemy is, of course, more noticeable in the senior officers, and age and rank often tell nearly as much in the conversation of the mess-room as they do on the parade-ground.

As for the men, they do not for the most part think out their feelings on the subject, but one who did so made such an impression on my mind that it may be worth repeating (with his full consent) what he said, as far as I can remember it, almost word for word. He was a young private of the new armies, well-educated, and had certainly no apparent cause to love his enemies. 'Oh, sir! I *know* I've killed one of them! It was so funny. I was on guard in the front line the other night; and, you know, it's a big strain when it's just beginning to get light, and you're sleepy and tired, and you've got your eyes fixed so hard on their wire till all their posts look to be moving about and dancing up and down, and you can't tell whether it's men

out or not, and fellows sometimes loose off round after round—and it 's only the posts. Well, that morning there was a mist, but all the same I felt certain it was a man I saw moving about and bending down as if he was mending the wire or picking things up ; but I wasn't certain enough to let go, and it seemed a pity to risk frightening him off. But I daren't wait too long—I was so afraid some one else would see him and get him first, and I wanted him all to myself. And then suddenly the mist kind of drifted away just where he was and I had a shot. I was so excited to get in first that I must have missed him, for he just raised himself up a little and looked round and then went down again ; so I had another go, but I took more care this time and he dropped forward a little on to the wire. I don't know if that killed him, but I fired off round after round into his body—seven or eight I should think ; I was so excited I couldn't stop. And he was still there some hours later just as I left him. Well, you know, sir, I never thought at the time, I was as pleased as Punch to think I 'd got one myself. And then after a few minutes—while I was having breakfast—I cooled down and I suddenly

wondered why I 'd done it ; I don't mean why I 'd killed him—I wasn't sorry about that—but why I 'd felt like that about it. It wasn't as if I 'd any grudge against him, and it was taking him unprepared—though he 'd have done the same to me, I know, if he 'd had the chance. I suppose it was the sport of it, but it was funny being like that.'

Volumes of commentary could be written on that story. It is worth noticing just where the self-analysis stopped ; there was nothing unsoldierly about it, he did not regret killing ; he did not allow himself to picture a stricken family on the Rhine, with himself as the wrecker of homes. It was a merciful thing that this boy, of less than eighteen, who had never been away from home till he enlisted, was spared the twinges of self-accusation which I have known others to suffer. But it was an ugly incident ; it cannot be a pleasant thought for those middle-aged men of all nations who make wars, and 'only wish they were young enough,' etc. etc., that they send out the youth of Europe to such an experience as this—and worse. And it speaks much for the refinement of an English home

that he could still talk about such things even as he did.

People will tell you of this or that battalion which 'will take no more prisoners,' and they argue from it an intense and lasting hatred. Intense at the moment, perhaps. Blood is up; mercy has not been shown, so mercy shall not be given. But the English clerk and the English working-man, generally speaking, will not after the war harbour the enmity that some of the officer-class profess to be laying in store. Their sense of humour is much too sure. Also they have, so to speak, 'been there before'; they know from civil life, much better than most officers know, that marionettes dance because people with brains are manipulating wires. They know that the presence of any particular batch of Germans on the battlefield is in itself no proof of the affection of those individual men for war, or of their responsibility for producing it and running it by atrociously barbarous methods. They feel that Germans, like themselves, are in the field under compulsion—actual or moral—and, though they hold with intense conviction that the German is wrong, and that that is why

they mean to beat him, they do not pile fuel on the fires of hate. Many people who have had a better education—not so much officers in the field who have learnt to admire as well as to dislike, but rather middle-aged men and women at home who ' are prepared to fight to the last drop of blood ' (i.e. *other* men's blood, while *they* hate from armchairs)—these people ' will never trust a Hun again,' ' can never forgive,' and so forth. ' The whole Prussian race,' they say, ' is obsessed ' ; to such men and women they are all ' stinking Germans.' But the private soldier's sense of smell is more discriminating ; he knows what kind of German stinks—and why.

Nor would the committal of atrocities by our Army be convincing evidence of a vindictive or unforgiving spirit ; a great deal of nonsense has been talked and more thought about atrocities. Such a view was well summed up to me by a Colonel whose battalion—a pattern of discipline —had at one time or another suffered most things at the enemy's hands, including gas, in the days when gas was considered an outrage of cruelty. ' People talk about German atrocities,' he said. ' Well, I don't know. I 've seen my own men

commit atrocities, and should expect to see it again. You can't stimulate and let loose the animal in man and then expect to be able to cage it up again at a moment's notice.' These words had been spoken to me many months before, but they came back to me as the boy told his tale. Performing his duty as a soldier, trained to regard the shedding of human blood as a necessity rather than as a survival of elementary savagery, he had lost control of himself; what he called sport was blood-lust, and in a trifling way what he experienced is a sample of the force in human nature which may make a soldier of any nationality bayonet an old man or rape a woman. Any doctor would explain the connection between the two. I am not in the least concerned to defend the Germans themselves from the charges made against them of cold-blooded and calculated rapine and murder in the early stages of the war by land, and throughout by sea and air. I am not arguing that or indeed any other point, but am simply concerned with the effect on our own manhood of a long period of this kind of warfare. The effect will certainly be great; are we right in assuming

that it will be wholly good ? I do not think so, though I do not agree with those who prophesy, as a result, a quicker recourse to force in settlement of future disputes—economic, social, political—than there has been in the past ; men and, let us suppose, women too will be less and not more inclined towards physical violence of that kind ; some would say even too little inclined. And though it seems that such strife, if it arises, will be more widespread and bloodier than it could have been before the war, yet the moral effect of war upon the fighter is not chiefly to be feared in that direction. But the reaction upon general morality, and particularly upon sexual problems, will be in some respects quite definitely harmful. Some study of this probability will occupy the next paper.

THIRD PAPER

A STUDY IN CONTRASTS AND IN THE INFLUENCE OF REACTION

Not only the imperturbable good spirits and kindliness, but also the gallantry and heroism of our soldiers, have been placed on record in despatches and in the many unofficial accounts of battles which all may read. Further illustration of either is unnecessary ; nothing that has been said or written could exaggerate the wonder of it. In theory many of us knew before how they might be expected to behave ; in practice we are still surprised into fresh admiration.

To some the most heroic feature will always appear the unflinching persistence shown month after month in ordinary trench-warfare ; sitting cold and lousy over a German mine, waiting for the next ' sausage ' or the next fatigue, living a life of acute discomfort and of continued and probable risk of death, with no glory of battle

—nothing apparently to make life worth living or death worth dying. It is this very splendour of their devotion that throws into stronger relief the damage that these times have done in drawing out or deepening in them other qualities and characteristics of which it is impossible to speak with pride. But the men themselves would not wish to be described as saints. Many of them admit freely that in some respects they are worse as well as better men for their months of service, though they would not always express it in terms of 'better' or 'worse.' Having very different ideas on the subject they would in many cases be almost proud of some of the failings a chaplain might think he detected amongst them. The blend of good and evil that the facts present almost defy any satisfactory explanation; we are accustomed to the contrast of good and evil in the complexity of human character, but ordinarily we skim over it as a disquieting fact which does not bear close investigation. It provokes so many disturbing and perplexing questions, it involves such nasty probing into motives and assumptions; it is awkwardly upsetting to theories and prejudices, and does not even

promise any ultimate satisfaction. Thus we leave it to theologians or philosophers, or perhaps to fanatic reformers with their one eye glued on to their patent receipt for all ills. And we are the more inclined to let the matter rest in the case of the soldier, not only because gratitude should make us blind, but also because, as we have noticed, 'the good' in him is so gloriously good that the explanation of its blend with evil will be more than usually difficult. But gratitude is the very reason for which the attempt must be made, and there is one very obvious explanation of the contrasts; it does not perhaps cover all the ground, but it reaches far.

There can be no temperament so equable, no life so smooth in its course that physical and moral reaction plays no part in it. We may take 'reaction' as the technical or scientific word for that experience which in our own characters we welcome or excuse as 'mood,' and in others condemn as 'inconsistency.' What is noticeable to some extent even in lives of quiet passage we should expect to find a much more forceful factor in the lives of men subjected to violent emotions or continual strain. The con-

tinual strain, mental and physical, of ordinary trench-life should be by now sufficiently within the reach even of meagre imaginations to need but little further description here. It falls heaviest on the commander of the company and platoon ; indeed, victory, when attained, will be due more to the steadfastness and heroism of these people than to the work of any other rank. These officers are the nearest to the enemy ; they are the last connecting link between the organising brain of the Army and the man with the bomb or the rifle ; they are the leaders of their men in a sense more actual than any Colonel or General. Theirs is a ceaseless responsibility, in most cases beyond their years, and it is borne in the face of work which in its technicalities is out of all proportion to the length and detail of such training as it has been possible to give them. They are literally holding the line of the Empire or of Civilisation or what you will, at a distance of perhaps fifty or one hundred yards from the most expert fighter that the science of warfare has ever produced. Meals and sleep may be taken when they can, for not only must almost every detail of their men's personal comfort and

fighting efficiency be superintended, but reports on these and other matters must be compiled and rendered at any and every time of day and night. (See ' The things that matter ' in *Fragments from France.*) These conditions of daily life are worth mentioning, because they are not such obvious claimants upon our attention as the fact that the officer's trench has a German mine under it, that he must go and see what damage the last shell did while the next is coming, or take out a patrol or wiring party and watch the wind for gas. I am not forgetting the pseudo-happiness of some trench-life, the comparative relief of some ' cushy spot,' [1] or the light-heartedness which would, in the very officers themselves, disclaim the foregoing description as ' piling it on too thick.' I maintain it is almost impossible to exaggerate the strain of average trench-life, exercised at any rate on the subconsciousness of any one taking part in it for long ; it has no glory of battle ; it is known as

[1] I am not sure of the right spelling of this word which has become so common in our spoken language. There seem to be two different lines of derivation by which it has come into its present common use as descriptive of anything that is soft or easy ; one is from a Hindustani word, the other from the French ' coucher.'

peace warfare—('We've had no fighting for seven months'),—but it is a strain which the mind and body of man were not designed to undergo.

Even more severe is the shock of what I have referred to as the violent emotions of a battle as affecting officer or man: the anticipation in eager excitement and expectancy, or the perfectly justifiable instinct of natural fear—the fear of being afraid,—both increased by the noises of the factories of death. Then the start, the anticipation turned into the vehement exercise of one or both of the most elementary animal instincts—desperate self-preservation and the lust of blood; and then perhaps inaction with scant protection under a devastating barrage of shell-fire, the most searching nerve test which perhaps alone has power to distinguish the old regular soldier from 'Kitchener's man.'

Against a background of such memories, vice, selfishness, intemperance, do not look as unlovely as once perhaps they did; the morally and physically revolting side of sin is so infinitely more easy to minimise or disregard through steady inurement to things which superficially

seem uglier. Meanwhile the pleasure and relaxation of vice are to be had for the asking, with the added zeal of contrast to the rough living, the fear, cruelty, and pain of what has gone before. Many officers and men are at no pains to disguise their opinion that a good time is due to them, and that they mean to have it whenever they get the chance. Their intention will not, I believe, be carried out universally, not at any rate in the sense in which they mean 'having a good time,' using this phrase with regard to immorality in the narrow implication of the word alone. But let us take it in its wider application—the vice of self-centredness, self-pleasing in its most comprehensive range as the negation of duty and service. To those who have been privileged to witness the wonderful perseverance and self-sacrifice of our soldiers in the field such an attitude is pathetically excusable; mostly unexpressed, it could be worded in some such way as this: 'I 've done my bit: I 've lived in Hell; I 've given the best of everything; I 've crammed into the war the sacrifices or discomforts of a thousand lifetimes. I 'm going to look after myself now that I 've served my country well

enough. How can I manage to be the first to get home and, having a start, pick the best job ? How can I make a pile quickly ? How best can I spend it on myself and family ? Where shall I live most comfortably ? How many pigs can I keep ? When shall I be able to afford a second car ? Where can one get the best dinner in town ?' If this were universal, and if the intention were permanently carried out—bang goes brotherhood, bang go all the so-called lessons of the war except militarist lessons, and back we are in the old state of things and worse. Close acquaintance with death has much to do with this attitude ; escape suggests to the reflective mood regret for lost opportunities in the past—opportunities of good or evil. A man of one kind thanks God for deliverance and leaps at the fresh lease of life in which he may use such time as is left to him in order to fit himself better for service in this world and beyond. Another man merely laments that he has allowed himself so nearly to pan out with many of the ' joys of life ' untasted, and determines to make up for lost time on his next leave or after the war ; such a theory as this is often not argued

out, but exercises its reactionary influence without passing through the conscious mind of the person in question. And this second class is far more numerous than are those who react from Hell to penitence, especially if we include men and women at home undergoing a war strain, different in character but the same in its possible effect on them. An opinion that I have heard expressed more than once—and expressed unemotionally, that is to say without any moral or religious interest attaching to it in the mind of the speakers—is that the general standard of personal conduct in England has fallen decidedly during the two years of war. This opinion presents an impasse which I do not propose at the moment to face, but if it is at all true it strikes another blow at the optimism of those who speak of the regeneration wrought by war. Indeed, it would be the saddest paradox that the period of most self-sacrificing and united service on all hands in the nation should yet coincide with a lowering of the moral standard in the individuals who compose the nation.

The reason why the release from strain or horror reacts in a larger number of cases towards

evil than it does towards good—for a time, and only for a time as I believe—is less a matter of opinion than of logical deduction. Let us exclude from consideration the large number of men who live by a definite moral system which is based on no actual religious belief ; and let us suppose—to clear the ground—that the reaction in their cases would be half in one direction, half in the other. The remainder—who constitute the majority—either believe in the Christian faith or have no code of morality beyond convention, which may include for our purpose instinct, interest, prejudice, and all the other things which serve as motives to action. Now if our estimate of reactionary force in this question is anything like being a just estimate, nearly all the men who come under the last heading—that is to say all except those who really believe in the Christian faith or have a definite alternative system of thought—may be expected to react, temporarily at any rate, towards evil rather than towards good ; and by evil, let us remember, we mean at least self-interest, the negation of service, of brotherhood and sisterhood. And they will so react towards evil

because they have, admittedly, no underlying principle or motive of sufficient strength to counteract demoralising influences.

Christian believers remain and they are of course the smallest class numerically; it is always amazing that any one can succeed in persuading himself that English men and women who believe in Jesus as their Saviour and try to follow Him are in anything but a minority. But even all the Christians there are will not return home pining to use the remainder of their days in the better service of their Master. The religious motive, if it is to be strong enough in men to resist other forces, must spring from a gratitude, most intensely felt, that God has delivered them from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence; that he has heard their prayer 'Spare me a little that I may recover my strength before I go hence and be no more seen.' It is probably true to say that thankfulness is the surest foundation upon which virtue and service can rest; it is certainly the bedrock of Christian motive: 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? . . . Feed My sheep.' 'In this was manifested the love of God towards us,

because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. . . . If God so loved us we ought also to love one another.' As sense of gratitude to an employer makes good workmen, and gratitude to parents makes a good son, so thankfulness for the Cross —a realisation of what Christ has done for and is still suffering with us—can alone make us good Christians. Now in the case of many out here, who really believe in Christ and in the power of prayer through His Name, this sense of thankfulness is difficult to secure. So many men, without losing their faith, find it difficult to pray; 'I can't say my prayers in the trenches' is a very common remark in letters or conversation. It is no more proof of a rejection of religious faith than is the spontaneous prayer of the careless in time of suffering or of acute peril a proof of their conversion to God. Deliverance therefore from special danger is not attributed by these men to prayer, partly because they do not realise or imagine the intercessions being offered for them at home. With no sense of special dependence on God through prayer they cannot fail to be affected by the spirit of fatalism

which alone makes endurable the lives of many. It was easy enough to argue from an armchair in the year 1913 against fatalism ; it is neither easy nor reasonable out here to contest the one comfortable doctrine which is the support of an innumerable host : ' I 'm not for it till one comes along with my number on.' ' If I 've got to go I 've got to go ; it 's no good worrying. I 'm what 'ud be called a fatalist, I am.' The accumulation of evidence before them preaches the same gospel ; the law of chances seems to work inexorably ; if a man is in the firing line long enough, sooner or later he will be killed or wounded ; if wounded and returned to duty often enough he 'll find a grave all right in Picardy or Flanders in the end—good and bad alike ; it makes no difference, so it seems. That is how the men feel, and small wonder !

To the officer-class and man of good education there is a further difficulty, one acutely felt at the present moment. We have recently been engaged in very heavy fighting and have lost a large number of our friends ; those who have survived do undoubtedly feel a relief which is akin to thankfulness, a sense of ' being spared

for a purpose,' but at present it is very hard for them to return thanks for deliverance to God. Better men, they feel, have been killed. The shell which just missed A and B, blew C and D to the four winds. How can a man thank God that he has been spared while his best pal has been taken? How can he attribute his own safety to God's protection and return thanks for it without at the same time attributing Harry's death to the same Agency and resenting it? If he were thoroughly selfish it would be simple enough, but his difficulty in the matter is in exact proportion to his *un*selfishness and his love for the friend he has lost. In a sense the greater Christian he is the harder it will be for him—at any rate just now—to return thanks like a Christian. This is because gratitude springs from instinct or training rather than from reason. There is often little enough of *reason* for the gratitude which we expect to find as a natural quality in a child towards bad or indifferent parents: in fact, the whole business of filial gratitude is illogical. But the grateful person does not stop to examine the motives or intentions of the man or woman who perhaps has

only *happened* to be of use to him, or has given him pleasure or happiness *by accident.* He feels that he owes a personal debt to the music-hall artiste for making his sides ache with laughter, irrespective of the fact that the performer draws two hundred pounds a week for so doing. Either the man has by nature what is called a grateful disposition, or he has been brought up to understand that he must take nothing for granted : that good manners, humility, consideration for others, require of him always the remembrance that no money on earth has the power to buy any man's service as by right ; and so on and so forth. Where such training has been absent, and the conditions of life have not been such as to give a grateful instinct a fair chance, a man thinks much before he brings himself to thank, and the place of gratitude is taken—to a large extent but not entirely—by reason, and this is assisted by pride : ' Have a packet of fags, mate ? ' ' I don't mind if I do,' or ' I don't mind.' Such an answer often conceals real gratitude for little or big things, but there is a reserve of pride ; reason has not proved the benefactor disinterested in his gift ; the instinct

of gratitude is much weaker than the natural dislike of being laid under an obligation. Such men unconsciously apply the same cold logic to God's dealings with them, and thankfulness comes with halting steps. God's motives are harder to fathom, His methods more difficult to understand. Even the believing Christian may forget that he is wrong in attempting to apply to Infinite Wisdom and Love the same process of cautious examination that he is accustomed to employ in his dealings with human character. Sincere as he is, to the point of ungraciousness in his dealings with men, his reverence for God demands of him an even more diligent honesty, and a proud humility hinders him from supposing that God can have made a special intention of saving *him* as an individual out of a multitude of 'better men.' So it is that thankfulness for mercies bestowed cannot always be at first a really sharp spur to a determination for renewed service and obedience to God in the future.

Up to this point we have studied the blend of good and evil possibilities in human nature, as displayed in the soldier of to-day, under one heading—the reaction of experience upon mind

and character. That force explains many contrasts which would otherwise appear grotesque or impossible, and we have tried to forecast the direction that it may be expected to take. It remains to take notice of the same blend at closer range where it cannot be explained away on the same grounds, but leaves us to the consolement of the Lancashire proverb: 'There's nowt so queer as folk.' The private soldier combines a self-protecting astuteness—('You can't tell the truth in the Army, sir; a man 's got to look after hisself')—with the directness and simplicity of a child. The most valued proof of friendship I ever received from a soldier was a reply to me on questioning a private as to the accuracy of a certain statement he had made. He said, 'I never tell a lie to you, sir.' The emphasis on the last word but one made me aware that I was being honoured with exceptional treatment. Generally speaking, taken *en masse* the men are difficult really to know well and to understand, owing to this habit of guarded reserve and evasion; once this is broken down by trouble or suffering of any kind they display a childlikeness, quite unsuspected, which, because it is

unstudied, is much more truly a part of their fundamental character than the shrewd and hardened exterior they present on ordinary occasions. Contrast their humorously tolerant treatment of German prisoners with their willingness to harbour a grudge and the unforgiving spirit so often to be found amongst themselves ; the foulness of their language and conversation with their wonderful sense of decency and their perfect courtesy ; their acknowledged disregard of truth with their genuine hatred of all humbug ; their rough scheming selfishness in a hundred ways with their devoted self-sacrifice and amazing tenderness. To see a badly wounded man, barely able to limp out of battle, stop under fire, help another man to his feet and support him along the road is a sight as common as it is unforgettable. The strange blend of hardness and tenderness, selfishness and self-sacrifice—common to humanity, but strikingly apparent in the soldier—can best be illustrated by two instances that have come within my knowledge ; I do not wish in any case to argue from particular and perhaps exceptional incidents to any general principle, yet to my own

mind these examples represent fairly the complexities of the private soldier, and bring us face to face with a solution of the difficulties which this paper suggests.

A friend of mine had his blanket taken, so he watched his opportunity and took another man's. The weather was bitterly cold. He was not the least ashamed of his action, nor was he sorry for the man he had robbed even when he found that the loser was sufficiently scrupulous or clumsy not to replace his loss in a similar fashion. He would never have stolen the man's money, yet he could see no inconsistency in taking what was at the time worth much more to either of them than a fistful of five-franc notes. Later he risked his life in a gallant attempt to save the man he had previously despoiled—not, I feel sure, in any spirit of remorse (that may have come later), but for the simple fact that, whereas it would be unreasonable to suffer cold and discomfort instead of another man, it was perfectly reasonable and indeed necessary to risk wounds and death itself in order to save the same man's life. Apart from the intricacies of individual character, influenced by convention and en-

vironment, an explanation of this incident may be found under the heading of discipline which forms the subject of another paper. The fine courage of the last act was in accordance with the discipline and training and the traditions of the British Army : the theft of a blanket was outside the scope of discipline ; it came under the influence of no tradition, save the oldest in the world's history—Getting 's keeping.

Here is another instance similar in character, but on a larger scale. A battalion goes over the parapet to the attack leaving packs behind. Another battalion comes up into the same trench in reserve, and, while waiting, rifle the other men's packs, razors being in chief demand. Later in the same engagement the men fight desperately in relief of the very people whose razors have come so strangely into their possession. Such an occurrence—not typical of general conduct by any means—is worth quoting, because it opens the door to a question of great interest. We see a prodigal offering of human life ; the sacrifice is as courageous as it is unconditional and whole-hearted. Indeed, the willingness to give life itself appears greater than

the willingness to live without those things commonly accounted to make life worth living. In one case it is a razor, or a blanket or the best billet; in another case it is a motor-car, a yacht or a savoury. Years before this war the penetrating writer of an 'Open Letter to English Gentlemen,' published in the *Hibbert Journal*, maintained that it was a far harder thing to live for one's country than to die for it—obviously so, as he said, since so many more were found eager to do the latter than to do the former. Many a man of ease and independence, who in days of peace could not spare from his amusements the time to acquire first-hand knowledge of the social conditions of the masses in an attempt to better them, has for many months on end denied himself both ease and independence in order to learn how to fight and, fighting, —if necessary—to die. Many a man, who would not have given up a shooting-box for one year in order to give a hundred families on the borderland of destitution the chance of a fresh start in the colonies, has since laid down his life in defence of shooting-box and slum-dwelling alike. Hundreds of working-class men who three years

ago would not have missed the final of the cup-tie in order to set another man free to go and see it instead, have since made the supreme sacrifice of all. And there is really, humanly speaking, no reason to suppose that in these respects when peace comes again we shall—whether rich or poor—behave any differently ; England and Englishmen and Englishwomen will still be less worth living for than dying for, unless the lesson is brought home to us ; we shall not even deserve the epitaph that might be printed over the graves of many 'civilian soldiers' : 'I lived for myself ; for England I died.' The forces of reaction already defined will tend to set on fixed lines a selfishness that before was hardly self-conscious.

The contrast in character presented to view by this probability is no fair instance of the commingling of good and evil in human nature ; it is evidence rather of the good, and the good alone, but lying fallow or misemployed. Surely no one save the militarist fanatic—('We come of a fighting stock')—would pretend that the high devotion which war calls forth in men could not be better employed than for mutual destruction.

It is the idlest pessimism to say that only war can teach us self-sacrifice—and that this fact forms its moral justification. Such pessimism becomes desperation if we allow ourselves to be persuaded that the spirit of service thus evoked may be expected to last only 'for three years or the duration of the war.' The real truth of the matter is that it needs a great cause and a great appeal to bring men to a sense of their responsibilities, and those who argue gloomily, as above, are unanswerable unless we can point to causes which shall be at least as powerful in inspiring men again in peace time to give of their best as the spirit of patriotism has proved to be in time of war. Then pettinesses will disappear and they will again respond. And such causes in abundance there are. If justice, morality, faith and honour, the defence of the weak are accounted things worth fighting and dying for in international relationships, the same principles should appear worth living *for* and living *out* in the lives of individuals. And this in all the manifold relationships of peace time: industrial justice, commercial morality, the faithfulness of man and the honour of woman, the care of the

Borstal boy, the prostitute, the slum child. There are causes enough and to spare in the world as it was and as it will be yet again to provoke an indignation as keen, an enthusiasm as devoted as that which roused us first in the behalf of Belgium and later on in defence of all of our own that we hold dear. War, once we are committed to it, unites us and frees us from the political morass into which we plunge all our ordinary problems; cannot there be afterwards some other cause found worthy of a public enthusiasm strong enough to disregard 'party' alike in Church and State? But—more than that—war tears aside the cover of ignorance and convention, of so-called good taste which always cloaks the world's worst misery and injustice; men at last see the need for their helping hand; the facts are forced upon them; they can no longer, in full view of their country's stress, trot out the selfish old: 'Personally, I believe all these things to be very much exaggerated; in any case we can do no good by talking about them.' They can no longer say that, for seeing they began to care and, so caring, they have served. Will peace once more thrust into the

background, behind the walls of hospitals and asylums, in prisons and mean streets, in brothels and doss-houses, in factories and ledgers the evils and injustices which always have existed and are in type as scandalous and wasteful as the ravages of war itself ? At any rate such causes should be no less capable of inspiring and successful in claiming the self-sacrifice and devotion which the events of the last two years have proved to exist. Why should peace obliterate the thought of them, descending upon us like the asbestos curtain at a theatre with its recommendation by convention, its pleasing security, its advertisements of good things to be enjoyed, and its obscuring of the confusion and burning waste that lie behind ? It is our own fault if we let this be.

Many of those who have given their lives for England gave them, not for the England of 1913 and 1914, but for England as she might be, as one day she shall—please God !—become. For that ideal they have gladly died. In their hope and faith those of us who survive must live and work. Their sacrifice must be made worth while.

We mourn—though pride is mingled with our tears—
Our best and bravest, some had made a name
In other fields, and some were new to fame,
But none had passed the springtime of their years.

A tragic waste? To these the vision came
That they should lay their lives down for their friends;
And shall not we, surviving, do the same—
For selfishness and malice make amends
And *live* for others, when peace comes again,
As these men *died*? Or have they died in vain?[1]

[1] C. F. A. in *Cambridge Magazine*.

FOURTH PAPER

DISCIPLINE—AND AFTER?

In reviewing two pamphlets issued by the Liverpool Fabian Society a writer in the *Spectator* lately said: 'The Collectivist authors seem to think that the millions of soldiers who have submitted themselves to military authority for a period in order to fight for civilisation, liberty, and all the amenities, graces, and fair things of life will wish to continue after the war under an authority different in form but every bit as strict and peremptory. We can assure them that they are wrong. The Englishman accepts discipline for an exceptional reason. He will not accept it as a desirable thing for its own sweet sake. In spite of the imperishable glory which his uniform has brought to him, the soldier at the front desires nothing more than to discard it; in other words, he wants to return to his own individual

life; he wants to go his way, unhindered and uncontrolled, and make his own choice of good and evil.' We have yet to consider this whole question of the use and effect of discipline; so far we have been thinking of the fighting man only, and most of the circumstances that have been passed under review are such as affect him alone. In turning to the subject of discipline and Army life in general, we come for the first time to an influence bearing on every man or boy who wears khaki whether at the front or the base, in Tidworth or Peshawar.

In the calculation of future tendencies in the social, political, or religious spheres after the war, it is the easiest thing in the world to forget that 'when the boys come home' it is only a bare majority of them to whom most of what we have been saying will apply. When we include the necessary garrisons of the Empire, the reserves of men in training at home, the large numbers on lines of communication and at bases behind the various fronts, we can see that the war has brought—broadly speaking—only two influences in chief to bear on the whole soldier-

manhood of our country: (*a*) The demand for self-sacrifice in a righteous cause; (*b*) Army life and discipline.

With certain notable, but comparatively rare exceptions—special enlistment of men and special selection of soft jobs amongst officers—the manhood of the country has shown itself willing to make any sacrifice required. Countless men at bases or depots, or in some branch of the service where the supreme sacrifice was not demanded of them were anxious enough, when they joined, not to be spared their full share of risk. And—more than this—they have continued to bear, month after month, the burden of routine, doing work in which the irksomeness of discipline and separation from home has borne sometimes more hardly upon them just because these troubles cannot have always the obvious point for the man behind the lines that they have for the man at the real front. The point I wish to make now is that, in estimating the future character of England, we must not assume in days to come that every ex-soldier we meet in the street has faced death on the battlefield, has learned the lessons of and reaction from trench-life, and can

therefore be estimated in the light of those considerations.

All those who have worn the King's uniform have however come equally under an influence hardly less mighty than the experiences we have been trying to weigh ; they have been plunged into the common life of the Army and have lived together under the Army system of discipline. Before going further I would clear the ground on one point ; should any old Army officer read the following views on Army life and discipline—its uses and effects—he will in all probability disagree with them violently, as they have met on occasions with opposition almost worthy of that description when I have stated them out here. But I still hold to my opinions as against theirs, and submit with the greatest deference that their experience of discipline is chiefly drawn from their knowledge of the professional soldier, the main feature of whose life is discipline for seven years or for much longer ; patriotism often was one of his motives ; the prospect of possible war was always a consideration ; but the circumstances of his immediate future, his motives for submitting himself to discipline and therefore

the processes of his mind in undergoing it were entirely different to the same things in the 'duration' soldier. For he, as already quoted, has submitted himself to military authority *for a period only*; he has accepted discipline for an exceptional reason and a particular purpose—to fight for civilisation and liberty. The regular soldiers, those of them that are left, generally speaking, want the war to be over—and nothing more, both officers and men; if they do not actually love the Service, as the majority of them do, they are at any rate content to remain in it; it is their working home, their means of livelihood; apart from war they have no fault to find with it, rather the reverse. But with the majority of our present Army all over the world it is entirely different; Army conditions do not touch their life apart from the present time of war; 'the Service' is not their livelihood so much as their inconvenience; they have no cause to love Army life as such—and why should they? They did not choose it as a recreation or even as their profession. They look forward to the end of the war not only because war is even more distasteful to them than to the regular

soldier, but chiefly because they want to return each to his own individual life ; to ' go their way unhindered and uncontrolled and to make their own choice of good and evil.'

I have every reason to know and to rejoice at the benefit that thousands of men, including myself, have gained, mentally and physically, from the comradeship and discipline of the Army. Many a milksop has been made a man ; many a weakling has found health ; wastrels have reformed ; selfish brutes have learned brotherhood and self-sacrifice ; shy, exclusive people have learned to ' muck in ' and share a common life ; narrow-sighted men have felt compelled to unglue the other eye ; pride has been humbled, obstinacy broken, barriers removed. All these benefits are glorious in the present and will be far-reaching in effect, but in these papers I am not concerned with them, though most thankfully acknowledging their existence. They are passed over here because they are so obvious ; they leap at us from the eyes of the professional optimists ; they shout at us from print, and it is not because I forget them or belittle them that I do not try to develop the thought of their probable trend

after the war. But there are already enough and to spare of apostles of the 'regeneration wrought by war,' who think of little else but the virility of the fighting man; who deploy the lessons we have learned in tribulation, no matter whether we *have* really learned them or not; who assume a New England because they hope for it. Some others of us desire a New England and believe in it, no less keenly than they, but have less in mind what has already been done than what remains to do and to avoid.

With such an end in view let us examine certain disadvantages that appear likely to emerge from the imposition of Army life and discipline upon the nation for a certain definite purpose and for a limited length of time only, and let us start with the consideration of discipline. When a man joins the Army he surrenders his personal liberty, and to a large extent his power of choice; at any rate the field in which he can exercise such choice is largely curtailed — fundamentally, perhaps, not curtailed, but for all practical purposes and appearances very definitely so. A recruit learns that he is less an individual than a part of a machine; for hours a day he is trained to do

exactly what the man does right and left of him. This induces the habit of mind by which a man will 'do as others do' when off duty as well. On duty it is discipline which suppresses individual choice; off duty the influence of the habit induced by the previous hours of discipline remains, and individual choice is affected by the thought of the machine. Now to do as others do under a system of rigid rule is excellent for the individual and for the body of which he is a member, especially when there is a great purpose behind the system such as the service of a righteous cause in time of war; but for each man to 'follow the crowd' (when that discipline has been removed and there is left no guiding principle), for each man to take his standards of life from the common practice of 'the majority' around him, has never been the maxim of any great moral or social teacher, and, it is to be hoped, never will be. There is no doubt a ready answer to this argument; we shall be told that the whole virtue of external discipline is that it trains the victim to self-discipline. It is true that this may be and often is the case, but to apply such a generalisation in the present instance

is wholly fallacious. The ' duration ' soldier has not accepted this state of things as his life; it is a rôle assumed for a special purpose. Take away the special purpose, give him his freedom suddenly on leave in England or after the war. What happens ? Artificial restraint has gone; it has not been long enough imposed to mould or alter character for life; *but it has been long enough endured to supplant to a great extent any conscious habit of self-imposed restraint and to cause the man, when newly freed, to rebound.* And rebound he does. This force, where combined with the reaction from plain living, discomfort, fear or horror—already considered in these papers—exerts a demoralising influence whose range extends far beyond the life and character of the man through whom it is begotten. In Picardy we open our English papers and read about the temptations to which munition workers and soldiers' wives are exposed; the ' Increase of Juvenile Crime ' is discussed like the discovery of a new star or of a substitute for petrol; ' men of the world ' returning from leave aver that they never before saw the streets of London so stream with prostitutes;

a famous General finds it necessary to initiate a campaign against the increasing suggestiveness of certain public entertainments. If these and other marks of deterioration about which you seem so concerned at home are true signs of the times you may have many explanations to offer for the state of affairs, but you will surely not rule out—for sentimental reasons—the possibility of the explanation just given as contributing its share to the general effect. If any one doubts the usual influence on us (with, of course, exceptions) of our life out here, he can ask the honest opinion of any one home on leave; at the best, we are extravagant and self-indulgent to a degree never before attained; at the worst, temperance and self-control have gone, and virtue, jealously guarded, has fallen. Numbers of the best and finest of our youth of all ranks have, during leave, made their first real step down, experienced their first loss of self-respect directly owing to one or both of two causes: (*a*) the relaxation from a temporary discipline imposed from without; (*b*) the excitement of rebound from discomfort, sorrow, ugliness. And for all such lapses, whether in rest-billets or in

England the war is the ready pretext : ' Things are all so different now ; it 's only for a time ; I shall settle down again some day,' or ' I 've never done it before, sir, and I should be ashamed of myself at home, but it 's different like out here.'

There are further points in which all cannot agree with those who see in any and every system of rigid discipline an unqualified blessing. It seems to me—I shall be only too glad to be shown my mistake—that discipline imposed from without lays, unintentionally of course, but no less surely, an undue emphasis on appearances. A newly enlisted volunteer in the Army, with the ardour of novelty upon him, tries his hardest to keep all the rules and abide by all the principles laid down for his observance. But it needs a very stolid character to persist in so doing. ' The Army has the machinery by which it can force me to obey ; anything that I can do to evade that machinery is perfectly legitimate. It is the Army's concern to make a soldier of me ; it is my concern to endure the process with as little discomfort to myself as I can manage. All 's fair in love and war. I take my risks and do my best not to be found out.' That is an attitude

which very soon comes, consciously or not, to many men, and it is almost inevitable. When we are our own masters and live by our own rules such an evasion would be impossible save to the grossest of self-deceivers ; but an iron discipline, not of our own manufacture, cannot demand the same inward respect of us, nor can our consciences trouble us so much in any attempts we may make to escape its disabilities. If all this is true—(and it is only guess-work)—it probably affects the soldier's military efficiency little or nothing, but it has a vast influence on his moral character, and with the latter no military system seems to have much concern. Take one obvious example : admitted that drunkenness is an offence against discipline and punishable as such ; all agree. But whether it matters or not apart from a man's physical fitness and his ability to discharge his duties to all appearance satisfactorily—that is a question solely for the private opinion of each officer and man. Why should any Army, as a *system*—(I mean apart from the personal influence of its leaders, which may be exercised in either direction)—concern itself with morals ? It is chiefly—no, only—concerned with making men

good fighters, and it has yet to be proved that the man who is at his best on the field of battle is the man of the highest moral character. There is much evidence to show that the hardest fighters are often not patterns of self-control or of moral excellence. That is not their business ; we do not require it of them. We cannot be such hypocrites as to pretend even to ourselves that we put *any* consideration before the defeat of the enemy. We ask of our men that they should be patient and gallant and should hit hard, and we are as a nation—and quite rightly—too grateful for their valour to consider their religion or morals as essential points, unless we can trace or prove a vital and convincing connection between the two. Such a connection cannot be satisfactorily established as a general working principle ; the Army system admits it as a possibility, but does not rely on it any more than the nation does. As chaplains we recognise with profoundest gratitude that our armies in the field are led in the higher command by men who for the most part value religious influences and moral virtues not only for their probable connection with fighting efficiency but also for their own intrinsic

importance. But where that view is held it can only be personal, not official ; the Army system of discipline gives it a magnificent channel for exercising a widespread influence, but, apart from such leaders, the Army would appear to have no very definite moral colour at all. The fault of course does not lie with the Army, but with war itself ; the fact of war forces a nation to submit to artificial restraint, to exalt physical courage at the expense of moral courage, to develop and extend many of the most magnificent Christian virtues to the grave detriment of many others.

This temporary discipline will have its more reasoned rebound as well. These soldiers in days to come will have their eyes about them to see that they are not driven ; they will not wish to continue after the war 'under an authority different in form but every bit as strict and peremptory,' unless they choose it once more of their own accord and for some particular purpose. Having once submitted themselves to the strictest rules, suppressing all political and personal prejudice, they will naturally resent lack of discipline in others who did not serve with

them during these times, especially when displayed in causes such as Home Rule or Female Suffrage, which may seem to them to be less worthy of support than the cause of England against Germany. It may be, however, that with grand inconsistency they will assert their own independence, moral, industrial, and social, and people will suffer a rude shock who think that they can be hectored. We churchmen and clergy need most of all to take this lesson to heart. It is our business to try and build up in the nation the quality of self-discipline. Where we affect to take discipline into our own hands we must be, like the Roman Church, much stricter and more consistent. The Church, like the Army, is a system or organisation, though it was called into being for an infinitely higher purpose than any human institution. We have therefore in the Church those very features of systematic discipline, imposed for a great cause, which appeal to the soldier. But we cannot expect him to recognise the discipline of the Church unless its own officers respect that discipline more than in the past we have given any appearance of doing. We must

start at home and must begin with ourselves. We shall do well to remember that the discipline of the Church, while strict and consistent, must not take the place of sense of responsibility, self-discipline in the individual member ; unbending in certain definite things, persuasive in all else ; preaching less of the law of God demanding obedience than the love of God claiming recognition and response. If we would impose rules on its members we must let them in turn have a larger and more rational share in its administration. There is a truly appalling possibility of the Church of the future being run on Army lines in this respect ; once let the soldier suspect this and he will fight shy at once ; he may grouse behind our backs, but he will not help us reset our house in order ; he will never even realise that we cannot even attempt to do so without his criticism and his help. If we consider attendance at services essential to individual religion we must not forget that we are dealing with men to whom mainly Church attendance has been a matter of compulsion from which, because of its association with the bondage of Army life, they will be thankful to be free. That many of them

will welcome entire liberty of action in their religious observances in order to use it to come back to Church as free men, is certain ; but services as held at the front form a very indifferent training ground for the Book of Common Prayer as it stands and is used at home.

There is only one other influence of Army life to which reference can be made in this paper, and it is perhaps the most important. Social reformers, politicians of all persuasions, and cranks of all colours foretell with joy the results that will obtain in the body politic from the mingling of the classes on Active Service. Over a certain field the crop will come to harvest as they hope ; shopkeepers and miners, ploughboys and city clerks, bird fanciers and tramps, costers and commercial travellers have learned to know and to respect one another. They are more likely to pull together in politics, or at any rate to lay much less store by political antagonisms than in the past ; it will be difficult for any one to work them off against each other as class against class. But it is not so sure that the war has really bridged the gulf between the masses and the upper classes—meaning by the latter phrase

the public school or University type of man. Mutual respect, admiration, affection—that has all come wherever it was lacking before, but *knowledge* has not come to the degree that it was needed ; the prospect of it has even receded. The class barrier here is stronger than before ; how could it well be otherwise ? Before the war the working-man was gradually struggling to a necessary independence ; only in out-of-the-way manorial regions did he touch his hat ' to the gentleman,' or the latter expect such attention from him. The years of bridge-building by school and college settlements had been producing in the last few years a larger increase in results ; through their agency, assisted by such means as the Cavendish Club and Association, the members of the so-called ' governing class ' were in increasingly large numbers getting to know the working-man, and he them, as man to man.

Has the war set all that back a generation or more ? Is the Army from the social point of view inevitably reactionary ? Young men have gone in thousands from their public school or University to learn afresh in the Army that ' the masses

are made of different stuff ' to themselves. May not many of them forget, on a return to civil life, that it was the uniform and the badges, since discarded, which for disciplinary purposes alone gave them a position of superiority which is no longer theirs ? So long as there be wars there must be this discipline and rank, the outward marks of respect, the rigid barriers ; all this is excellent for the purposes intended, and where it is most carefully observed there will always be found the flower and perfection of any army. This truth has been proved time out of number in this war. Thus, for wholly admirable reasons —(admirable, that is to say, if we pass over the question of the fact and necessity of war itself) —the young officer has been obliged to treat his men as people who mustn't argue with him or contradict him ; who must say 'Sir' and salute, may never become ' familiar,' must make way for him, stand at attention and perform the rest of the very necessary formality of Army discipline. Many instances could be given of this artificial inequality, which, until he has hardened himself to the idea of it for practical purposes, the newly commissioned officer, to

his credit, often regards with healthy resentment. But willingly or unwillingly, consciously or unconsciously, it comes at last natural to him ; its advantages for the great Service of which he is proud to be a member are so obvious that he may not remember, in civilian days to come, that he has acquired a habit of mind which is—once away from the Army—unnecessary and, because no longer necessary, neither just nor wise. The splendid spirit existing between officers and men, the devotion of men to officers, the care of officers for their men—these facts hardly affect the position I am trying to make clear ; they do not constitute *knowledge*. Officers and men understand each other thoroughly ; know each other through and through *as soldiers*, but under present conditions the one cannot get the real personal knowledge of the other as citizen to citizen. This ignorance is probably much greater on the man's side than on the officer's. At the risk of repetition I would attempt to make my opinion here still plainer ; on joining the Army the officer forces himself to subordinate his own point of view—whatever it may be—about 'the classes'—to the Army

requirements of rank; he must from the very first be less concerned to study the point of view of his men as *citizens* than to drill into them the official Army attitude towards them as *soldiers*; and the two are entirely different.

There is one great hope. In this war more than ever before in the English Army men of all classes have served together in nearly all ranks. That fact—so obvious—has already been mentioned but not in this definite connection. I am thinking now primarily of the very large number of public school men who—whether they have later on taken commissions or not—have served for months on end side by side with the weaver, the clerk, the tram conductor, the coal heaver, and the artisan. The men who have had that experience should come out of the war with an intimate first-hand knowledge of the minds and modes of thought, the prejudices and their causes, the misunderstandings and their justifications, the aims and ideals, the character and philosophy of life of fellow-citizens of infinitely different education and environment to their own. To what use will they put this unique store of experience? They may speak with an

authority which cannot be gainsaid. There is nothing that we might not learn if they will teach us, and teach us quite honestly without prejudice or loss of memory. Above all, there is one truth—if it be truth and not merely the blind hope of my own prejudice—that they must surely make known from their store of great discoveries; and that is, that wars in Europe will one day be impossible, because Europe's working-classes will insist that it be so. The tie of common humanity, common brotherhood, common advantage will be at last stronger than the tie of any nationality. The governing classes will in this respect one day be governed unless they too, for whatever reason, determine that wars must cease and join hand in hand with those they lately led in war and lead them so in peace. And this must be done in the next ten years if it *is* to be done at all—done while all men still dwell on the horrors of war and the bestialities of war, before passing time has reflected a glow of sentiment and glamour on to it, and medals and ribbons and the coloured reminiscences of forgetful men alone are left to give a vastly misleading opinion of war to the

children of generations to come. It must be done too while the classes still respect each other for what each has done for his country in the time of her greatest need ; while no class can sling mud at any other class for its lack of patriotism. The men of the upper classes have proved their capacity for self-sacrifice. The rally of working-men to the flag is an unimpeachable guarantee that their known objection to war as such, their reiterated belief that war *can* be eliminated from the world's future, does not spring—as so often suspected by others—merely from a consideration of their own purses and their own skins. When peace comes again they can speak freely without fear that any man will dub them coward or traitor. Those too who have learned their point of view, its eminent reasonableness, its large humanity, can bring others to meet them half-way in the great endeavour, saying 'They have mingled their blood with yours ; they have done great service for England's name. Join them in a common cause greater even than any to which England has yet bidden you.' For a time such voices will be heard with respect and consideration if

raised without delay—but not for long. In the welter of our peace-time prejudice and party passion such claims on our attention, claims bought with sweat and blood, may so quickly be forgotten, and many good men who gave their lives in a war to end war will then have died in vain.

FIFTH PAPER

SOMETHING DEFINITE

'You are a pessimist, you cannot even see the humorous side of the things of which you speak. You rob of its due emphasis the natural goodness of mankind. Your omissions are glaring. You propound problems with but the barest hint of a solution. It 's all very well in its way, but isn't it all unnecessarily grim ? '

That is a fair composite summary of the criticisms of some who have heard the foregoing opinions expressed or have glanced through these papers. I would attempt to answer them here.

The natural goodness, and the evidence of 'natural religion,' as displayed in the lives of our soldiers, receives its proper emphasis in the papers written by Mr. Gordon in this book. I am in almost entire agreement with a great deal, though not all, that he says on that and other

subjects ; we are not concerned to repeat each other ; we have, save for occasional overlapping, confined ourselves as far as possible each to his own chosen line, nor have we separately or together attempted to cover all the ground. We have not, for instance, tried to deal directly with the effect on our Army of a closer acquaintance with religious observances on the continent and with the habits and national character of our great and gallant Ally.

As to humour, life at the front, as anywhere where Englishmen collect, is full of it, conscious or unconscious. The nation has quite rightly made the most of it during the past two years. The Press, comic or would-be-serious, and the revue writers have sometimes made more of it than occasion demanded or good taste should have allowed ; but if mistakes have been made, perhaps they have been made on the right side. True it is that laughter ripples through France and Flanders, laughter in which even the writer of these ' dolorous pages ' has been known to join. For the purpose, however, which I had in attempting to express myself in this book I am well content to plead guilty to the charge of

presenting war and its aftermath as vastly humourless subjects. Long may they be considered so !

The omissions are, I am afraid, very glaring. So little has been said about *the* dominant note of Army life at the front, its good comradeship, the gospel of ' standing in with your mates,' of ' never letting down a pal ' ; or the same thing as seen amongst officers—the hospitality, the open friendliness, the free brotherhood of arms, so conspicuously noticeable for instance in the officers of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. Again, there has been no attempt to make any definite distinction between the old regular private soldier (the ' working-class ' man) on the one hand, and on the other the more educated citizen who has served by the thousand in the ranks. The two classes do not really admit of separate treatment within the scope of this book ; distinctions have been pointed out where it has seemed necessary, but there is a much larger common element than is generally supposed in which the two are merged. Nor has any allusion been made to the mental effects of wounds—the mark left on the wounded by

weeks of suffering and by the opportunity for interminable reflection; let those who know speak of the effect of these things on mind and spirit.

It is sufficient to admit these and other omissions in passing, but the failure to suggest solutions to difficulties raised—raised, it may seem to some, quite unnecessarily—is a more serious matter. 'It is all very well to make criticisms, but any child can point out difficulties. What we want to find is a way out.' I would answer that in the present case possible problems have not been presented in any capricious mood; any one may be justified in attempting to attract attention to certain facts and considerations of importance which in his opinion might otherwise escape notice, while leaving it to more competent people to deal with the situation when it arises. Nor is it pessimistic to have a ready eye for obstacles, provided there is an inward conviction that such obstacles *can* be surmounted. But recognising a certain element of justice in such criticisms, I am proposing in this paper to present certain possibilities in the form of an appeal. Certain ways of facing those dangerous contin-

gencies may here be indicated with considerable hesitation; they are possibly all wrong; if so, their faulty construction, their lack of insight and wisdom constitute the appeal to others to provide something more practical and offering a better hope of ultimate satisfaction.

It has been implied in these papers that a reaction may be expected towards intemperance and immorality when the army is disbanded. The former of these might well be expected quite apart from any connection with reaction; men who have for months been accustomed to swill French beer in unlimited amounts will attempt the same performance on English ale with truly surprising results. Virtue enforced by legislation may appeal to some, though it is not desirable from most people's point of view; but all the same the absolute extinction of bad spirits, and of beer of *over a certain percentage of alcohol*, would be surely a legitimate protection of a man from himself. I know that 'good old English beer' is supposed to be the sturdy bulwark of the English national character, but it has not been shown in the present war that the French or German national character is less sturdy without

it ; it has yet to be proved that a future generation of Englishmen, who never having tasted would not miss it, would be lacking in either sturdiness or contentment through its absence. ' We can't do without our old English beer.' Is that going to be the cry from men who were prepared a few months before to sacrifice not only comfort and, if need be, life—but even beer itself ?

That suggestion is a matter for action, if any one be found to advance its cause. There is a further suggestion on a matter of attitude for each individual citizen to consider. The attitude suggested is merely one of common sense ; whether the no-treating order continue for a time or not he might remember that the perpetual ' Have a drink ? ' is a merely conventional and largely selfish method of displaying gratitude and offering a welcome home. It is selfish because ninety-nine out of every hundred men who stand another man a drink do so because of the opportunity thereby presented of having a drink themselves. It is also largely a matter of convention which seems to require that the grateful recipient should return the favour within ten minutes ; and so the farce

runs on, the only time-limit set to it being an engagement to be kept by either party or a meal to be eaten by both. Thus early in life many a young man reaches a state of permanent distention, a stage in which the liquid refreshment, once taken in flabby obedience to a convention, becomes a permanent necessity with bodily space thus artificially created for its accommodation. Even where the generous distribution of drinks is not half-selfishly inspired it is almost equally grotesque ; it is appalling to contemplate the lives that have been twisted out of the straight and the homes rendered unhappy through the agency in the first place of the kind fool with his everlasting iteration of ' What 'll you have ? ' Why is it that the average Englishman's main idea of friendliness and good fellowship should consist chiefly in the proffer of liquid refreshment *with an insistence that it must be alcoholic ?* This insistence, largely conventional, is just as unreasonably silly and narrow in one direction as for instance is, in the other direction, the anxiety of a fanatic temperance advocate to enforce sobriety by abolishing port wine !

So too with sexual immorality—we may be

prepared for an orgy of unrestrained promiscuity. Pent-up forces will be loosed; money for a time will be abundant and women will be complacent. The risk of contracting syphilis is not likely under the circumstances to be a sufficient deterrent; gonorrhœa is a minor discomfort compared to wounds or death cheerfully faced in battle, and is much more pleasurably obtained.[1] Education is the cry to remedy everything, but it is confined in this matter too exclusively to the removal of ignorance on the physical side alone. By all means let our boys and girls, in or out of school, be taught the mysteries of body and birth; but also let every boy and man be drilled into a knowledge of certain other truths—that no woman can become a prostitute at all save through the action originally of some one individual man through whom she first ceases to be an 'honest woman'; that economic pressure has infinitely more to do with prostitution than has feminine passion; that the whole question of social inequality takes on a

[1] The much questioned connection between alcoholic indulgence and venereal diseases is firmly established in the Report of the Royal Commission on the latter subject, page 65, paragraph 235.

fresh colour when the man who has money or some money buys the woman who would otherwise have little or no money, and then makes her dependence on her miserable trade his justification for giving her his custom. Such action is the result of blind or wilful ignorance ; ignorance should never be advanced as an excuse for this by any intelligent man, and anyhow it is almost inexcusable wherever the man draws his livelihood and his spare cash from any trade or business concern connected, however indirectly, with the gross underpayment of women workers. There are many other things that need to be taught, but principally that the risks a man runs in sinning are risks in which the happiness of others, living and yet unborn, is intimately and unavoidably entangled. Yet all this and much more, about which there is a simply stupefying ignorance or indifference amongst eighty out of every hundred men of all classes, may not be always sufficient to restrain a man of strong passions and to make our country what it should be. The one thing needed as well is an understanding of the spiritual war between evil and good which is more permanent and im-

portant than any worldly campaign, and a belief in the power that Christ gives to those who are willing to stand by His side.

On the purely material or physical side of the question the work of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases is a long step in the right direction. In this connection I have leave to mention a suggestion made by a friend of mine.[1] I quote it more or less as he made it to me, slightly extended, but without comment. It is 'that the Church of England should take the lead by refusing to "solemnize" syphilitic marriages; that this is no real hardship or injustice on any man; that a man who rates God's blessing through the Church on his married life sufficiently high will consider it well worth the inconvenience of troubling to obtain a doctor's certificate for a clean bill of health; that even if he is not pronounced fit he can avail himself of the means provided to effect a cure—a step which otherwise a false and selfish modesty might have prevented him from taking; that there can be no blessing of God on a tainted union, for, whether or not either of the parties

[1] The Rev. Harry Blackburne.

are guiltily responsible for the taint, it is one that may affect the children yet unborn, and therefore the marriage at that time is not such as to win God's approval ; that the Church in so insisting would be taking a perfectly reasonable and legitimate course in removing the mockery of many ' Christian marriages ' of to-day : that a marriage in Church is meant to be and should be a sincere act of Prayer—by people who believe in God—for His Blessing on them at the time of the most important change of their whole lives ; that people to whom these conditions for any reason do not apply should only be thankful that the Church at last does not allow them to make humbugs of themselves, even for an hour, nor a mockery of a religion in which they do not believe ; and that they should seek legal union elsewhere ; finally, that it is no wild prophecy to say that eventually the State will insist on a clean bill of health in those who propose to beget children, and that those who love their Church would like to see her take the lead in this instead of being compelled, years hence and faintly approving, to adopt a Christian principle from a secular authority for purely material reasons.'

To return to our main subject—the whole question, so vitally important to the nation's and the world's future, as to what will happen the year after the war. The method by which the discharged soldier is 'paid out' will have no small bearing. Is the accumulated surplus of his pay to be flung into his hand while he is reeling with the excitement of a renewed and unaccustomed freedom, to be spent perhaps before he has even reached the door of his own home, or at any rate before he has steadied down to the realisation that he will need all his savings for himself and family in the years that lie ahead?

The requirements of the whole situation seem then to be chiefly an application of practical common sense to the treatment of our soldiers on their return, and any campaign of common sense to be successful must be led by the women; they must not underrate nor allow to be underrated their enormous influence; they must remember that the re-dominance of man over woman which war so often brings in its train is due less to the conceit or self-assertion of the fighting man than to woman's unnecessary self-

depreciation and to her faculty for hero-worship. Our women must above all keep their heads and help the men to keep theirs. They cannot complain of our lack of chivalry towards them in some respects if they ever lower their womanhood in any way so that it cannot command our reverence. However he may appear to treat her, man idealises woman ; if she allows herself to lose his respect, if she robs him of his ideal she is doing herself and him the greatest disservice. Above all, through the first months of riot and reaction those who love Christ had better see to it that they have a Church on her knees. And when things settle down again, what then ? The orgy will not last. The Churches will then have their opportunity. Men will be once more gaining their poise ; regret will come for any selfish plunge into dissipation. 'Was it worth it' ? Many will be asking themselves, as they look back to the struggle in which they lately took part. 'Did we offer our best, did we bury our friends by the score, did we take human lives beyond count simply for this ? Is there not *happiness* to be found as well as pain and pleasure ? Is there no purpose in life after all ?

Is all waste ?' The religion of Christ alone has a satisfying answer to such questions, and the Churches have certain foundations upon which to rest in offering a solution. I am not thinking of the foundations existing in the character, in the natural goodness of men themselves: the subject of those foundations and how to build upon them is dealt with in another part of this book. Rather I am referring to that spirit of comradeship and brotherhood which has been developed by service in the Army. No appeal to that spirit will ever be made quite in vain. The rebound from the thraldom of ' the Services ' will not be permanent. The reaction from hardship and suffering will not for ever turn to mere amusement and self-interest. The call, stifled in men's hearts for a time perhaps, will break forth again. They have learnt what Service and Brotherhood mean ; they will chiefly need to be shown in what direction and with what purpose those lessons can be applied. Hitherto they were applied to Defend, but, in Defending, to waste and to destroy : ' Show us instead how to create and to build up. What can I do *now* that others may not suffer in that way in the

world again, that the flow of blood that has been shed may not be waste? Do all these other things you talk about—commercial morality, industrial justice, religious reunion, personal purity—really make a difference? How is it that war is in truth a harvest of the world's greed, injustice, or deceit? If my personal, individual life as a private citizen contributes towards it one way or the other, show me what to do or what not to do. I am ready to try.'

There can be little doubt that the hoped-for revival of Christianity will come through some such appeal as that to its possibilities. There will be one preliminary objection to be overcome in their minds, and that is that Christianity has been tried already and found wanting; this must be strenuously denied; the charge must be answered before it is made. Unspoken, not consciously thought out, that suspicion is working silently in the minds of thousands, and it is a lie. In the modern world the principles of Jesus Christ are simply untried in the daily lives of the majority of us; and this largely for two reasons, reasons which are stumbling-blocks to many who would otherwise here and now give

Christianity a trial. It is supposed that to become a Christian means to say 'Good-bye' to joy and vivaciousness and to become incurably *dull*. *Dullness*—that most unforgiveable of social failures—is attached as a stigma to the name of Christian. Whether or not the accusation is justifiable we do not need to incur it. The Christian course is a great adventure from start to finish ; it demands the best of wits and heart and humour that man or woman has to give. It should inspire the ordinary work and amusements of everyday life with a joy that nothing else can bring. So many shrink from starting out on it because they think they are happy now, and think that they will court unhappiness if—if what ?—if they ask Christ to take possession of them ! Rather that joy springs partly, though not entirely, from the conviction that if one is for Christ one is, in spite of all outward appearances to the contrary, upon the winning side. This is the other difficulty of those who have not yet made trial ; it is not only that we are often unsatisfactory advertisements for the ideals we profess, but that those ideals seem to the common run of men to be in any case impossible of

achievement. The man who would not retire in battle without orders to do so even if he thought—*which he never would allow himself for one moment to think*—that he was fighting for a beaten country, or that reinforcements would never come up, that is surely not the man who will reject a trial of an even greater cause solely on the ground that it represents an impossible ideal ? The aims for which we stand are practical aims ; we are not bound to explain to the last detail *how* exactly in politics or the social order they will come to be realised. Evils disappear from the world only when a sufficient number of individual people are passionately convinced that they must remain no more ; then a way is found. That is why each separate man or woman who will believe in the possibility of these aims and work for them is an addition of priceless importance towards the achievement of the end. The present attitude towards what we represent has been expressed to me often out here and is held, I am sure, widely amongst officers and men : ' All that you say about all these things is, of course, perfectly right in its way, Padre, and we expect you to live for these

ideals and respect you when you do. After all that 's your job, your profession. And I think there are lots of people made like that. But I 'm different ; after all there 's a lot in human nature, isn't there ? Yet I 'd try to do what you say myself, only you see I 'm only one and that would make no difference.' Or again, from older men : ' You may take it from me, speaking as a man of the world, you are out after impossibilities. The world will never become as you wish it to become. War, immorality, greed—human nature ! You can't change it. When I was quite a young man I used to have my ideals. When you get to my age——'

There are three answers :

(1) ' Your view of human nature is, though unconsciously so, an insult to mankind. Seeing the evil it ignores any possibility of there being a divine nature in man as well. You ought to know that you are wrong. You have proved it in your own life.'

(2) ' The world's history is a long chain of fulfilled ideals—moral, social, scientific. One century's impossibility has been the next age's achievement. So it will be again.'

(3) 'The only things worth anything that endure in the world were started or urged or attempted by men or women who were aiming at an ideal pronounced to be impossible by those around them. They may not have reached it, but they got further than they ever could have risen if they had taken any lower aim.

. . . . . .

Meanwhile the present war must be fought and won. Nothing that is written in these pages is intended to divert any energies from the immediate objective. Yet some have time to prepare for the ultimate goal, and all have time to think about it.

'Hullo, Padre, writing that beastly old book of yours? Come and . . .'

SIXTH PAPER

POSTSCRIPT: AN EPITOME OF WAR

THE boy who was to die at five in the morning lay asleep on the floor. He had been convicted of desertion deliberate and flagrant. Every consideration had been given by the court which tried him and by the higher authority which confirmed his sentence to the defence which had been put up; to his youth—he was only nineteen—and to any other factor which might weigh in the balance against the execution of the extreme penalty. That absolute fairness which is gloriously characteristic of the Army in dealing with such a case had been exercised towards him, and had decided against him, for 'no man liveth to himself.' His example, if followed—the failure of an Army always to fight hard and never to look back—this would mean in the end more suffering and bloodshed than need be before victory were won. So *he* must suffer, and in a

sense lose his life for other men, since 'no man' —not even a deserter—'dieth to himself.'

For the last time he has faced his battalion on parade the afternoon before with a moral courage, untouched by bravado, which must for ever free his memory of the charge of cowardice. Then the men of his old regiment, bearing the old regimental badge, are marched straight off to their spell in the trenches ; he alone badgeless and degraded is turned away to his last billet in France.

And now on the floor of an estaminet back room he sleeps. He has willed away his dirty old purse and his ring, he has dictated his last letter and sent his last message. 'What 's the time now, sir ?' 'How 's the time going, sir ?' So every half-hour or less until 3 A.M. when sleep overtakes him. The guard shuffle about wearily next door, and a faint light creeps slowly into the room.

He has to all intents and purposes already passed over, and we commit him now into the hands of the Faithful Creator and most Merciful Saviour. He will be roused at the last possible moment and, ten minutes later, before he is fully

awake to the world, he will have left it for good and all. For others into those minutes may be crowded a lifetime of anxiety and pain; for him —darkness and some confusion imperfectly apprehended, and then unexpectedly and instantaneously the end.

. . . . . .

'We give Thee hearty thanks that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world.'

Finally beyond the reach of it—thanks indeed.

. . . . . .

In a world of war such things must be. *Given war conditions*, conditions which every soldier understands, this is human justice. Nor is it—(*comparatively speaking only*)—waste. There is no doubt that the possibility of the death penalty, and the example of its actual fulfilment have saved more human lives than those that have been so destroyed. This is fully understood by the man himself; he has no sense of injustice. He realises sometimes the way in which he can make atonement in a double sense—voluntary and involuntary; voluntary in that the fortitude and manliness he has the chance of displaying in

his last twelve hours will more than balance the hesitation, the lack of fibre or nerve, the selfish love of his own amusement, convenience, or safety which have helped to place him where he is.

And in a sense he can, perhaps, be brought to understand that, though he has not chosen his end, he can, by an act of will, accept his fate as the sacrifice of his own life for the lives of other men. He can go out satisfied that what little he has still to give is still worth the giving. Even *he* is dying for his country. Even *at the very end* he may live and die for an Ideal.

PART II

BY

GEOFFREY GORDON

FOREWORD TO PART II

IN the papers that follow I am conscious of a distinct debt to the 'Student in Arms,' which I am anxious at once to acknowledge. In the subject of the 'Dilemma,' with which Paper VII. is concerned, I was in correspondence with him as long ago as last April, and his letter to me on this subject has, since his death, been published in the *Spectator* of December 2nd. Some of the essays which he wrote in the early part of 1916 had impressed me so strongly that, when I was at work on these papers, I deliberately refrained from reading him any further, lest I should become unwillingly guilty of plagiarisation.

Since despatching my own papers to the printers, I have read and re-read the volume of his collected essays, and I can only say that, recognising my own debt to him, I should be more than proud if these papers should be judged as in any way reflecting the same spirit. G. G.

January 1917.

SEVENTH PAPER

THE CHAPLAIN'S DILEMMA

SOMEWHERE in England: A young curate is passing down a mean street of the town. Two children are playing in the gutter: one is a mere babe, one is old enough to come to Sunday School. As he passes, the curate overhears their conversation. 'D' you know 'oo that is?' says the elder to the younger. 'I knows 'im; that 's Mr. Gawd, that is.' Mr. God—a burdensome title, and a heavy responsibility, but at the same time it is a real encouragement to the young curate to know that there are some people to whom he is indeed the representative of God.

Somewhere in France: The chaplain is walking down the narrow streets of a town which for many months has been one of the bases for the British Army. A crowd of children of all ages leave their play and run to him as he comes. 'M. Cinema, M. Cinema!' 'Cinema ce soir?'

'Laissez-moi venir.' 'Non, M. Cinema, pas lui—mais moi, moi—c'est ma mère qui fait votre linge.' 'Au revoir, M. Cinema.' 'A ce soir, M. Charlie Chaplin.'

Mr. God or M. Cinema—for which does the chaplain stand? Does the soldier think of his Padre in the main as the representative of God, or chiefly as the provider of canteens, cinemas, and creature comforts?

When a battalion is constantly in action and engaged in fierce fighting such as has taken place in the long battle of the Somme, the chaplain is busy enough with the wounded, with funerals, and with letters to the anxious and bereaved at home; but when once his unit is settled down, whether they are at a base or in some quiet sector of the trenches, he is faced with a very real dilemma. Either he will elect to stand strongly, definitely, and exclusively for spiritual things, in which case he will have to be content to come in contact with only a very few men; or, in order to get to know the battalion as a whole, he will have to throw himself into a number of minor activities, and run the risk of getting but rarely on to a higher spiritual level. The Roman Catholic

chaplains have chosen definitely the former alternative ; they are frankly sectarian, and have dealt with their own particular flock alone. In peace-time warfare, as we who have been in Picardy describe rest billets or ordinary trenches, they refuse steadily to have anything to do with canteens and the like ; and even during a battle you see the results of their deliberate choice, for they always try to deal with their flock almost exclusively on spiritual levels. The methods of Anglican chaplains, of course, vary widely. There is less uniformity among us than among Roman Catholics here, as at home. But for the most part, we have chosen the other alternative. Many of us have become more or less expert in the business of canteens, we organise concerts and arrange cinema shows. At dressing stations we are busy with water and with blankets or helping with the stretchers, and we seize what opportunities we can of doing our more definitely pastoral work.

To the casual reader it will seem almost the obvious thing that the chaplain should give what help he can for the men's comfort and pleasure, and especially that he should minister

to the needs of wounded men who are primarily conscious of being thirsty and tired. For my own part, I agree with that view, and not only have I run canteens, but at advanced dressing stations I have been content for hours together to busy myself with blankets and hot soup for their needs, happy if just once or twice in a night I could put in a word of more articulate religion ; but in fairness I would say that there is a strong case to be made for the more specialist plan. The argument, as I have heard it put, is much as follows : ' Nearly all our men are apt to think much more of their bodily needs than of the requirements of the spirit. This is intensified when a wound has made the bodily needs more than ever insistent. We chaplains are here to remind men constantly of the spiritual side of their nature. Moreover, at such places there are plenty of doctors and orderlies to deal with the wants of the body. The real justification for our presence, as chaplains, is not that we may be extra orderlies, but that we may supply just that other element, the spiritual, which, without our presence, might so easily be forgotten.'

It is a real dilemma with which the chaplain

in battle time is faced. Either he must suppress the natural and Christian instincts of his heart, which prompt him to supply, so far as he can, the obvious and pressing need : or, if he busies himself with such things he must run the risk of obscuring his witness, and of doing little else but work which would be done not less effectively by the least trained orderly. The same dilemma, in a less acute form, faces him behind the lines. Either he must take up a narrowly religious attitude ; or, he must be in danger of seeming to be nothing more than a caterer and amusement provider. At bottom, the alternatives before him are not different from those which face a parish priest at home, who is in danger either of becoming so much occupied with organisations, institutes, clubs, etc., that the spiritual in him is altogether swamped, or of wasting many hours of his time over the wholly unimportant devotional eccentricities of pietistic ladies. The solution of course is compromise. He has to concern himself with many lesser things, but not only must he not be tied to them too closely, but also, in the doing of them he has to be alert for opportunities of a more important kind.

In the Army, the problem is further complicated by one of the most deep-rooted prejudices of military religion. The soldier almost invariably looks at religion as a thing apart, a department of life, reserved and separate. That is true both of those who ' go in for it ' and of those who ' don't hold with it.' Many a man who believes in God and leads a Christian life will tell you frankly that he 's not one to go in for religion, when all he means is that the sub-section of religion which is concerned with churchgoing does not happen to appeal to him. Some of our most faithful communicants will, in the same way, take a not less narrow and departmental view of religion. Those of us chaplains who feel ourselves pressed by our dilemma are occupying much of our time with things which the soldier would describe as non-religious, but on every opportunity we are preaching constantly and insistently the all-inclusiveness of Christianity. Christianity in terms of ordinary duty. Duty in terms of Christianity. Christ the Lord of all life. Such are the themes of many of our sermons; but the prejudice that Christianity and the Church are, or should be, something outside and

beyond ordinary life is so deep-rooted that it is difficult to dislodge. To illustrate the two different views of chaplain's work, I contrasted just now the attitude of the Roman Catholic priest with that of the average Anglican. The larger difference may similarly be brought into clear relief if we compare for a moment the attitude of the Roman Church and of our own Church of England to the war as a whole. There has lately been published a collection of the utterances of the Pope on the present war. They contain, as we should expect, a strong appeal for peace. There are in these speeches remarkable omissions, but there is none more striking that the entire absence of any note of penitence. 'The Pope sits upon his Apostolic throne' (and here I quote from a recent number of *The Challenge*) 'and looks out over a warring world, and thinks it very sad that it should be a warring world.' Not one word is said to suggest that the Church is in any way responsible for the condition in which the world finds itself. The Archbishop of Canterbury has claimed no such detached superiority. He sees that the collapse of a civilisation in the midst of which

the Church has been at work for two thousand years is a challenge and a scandal not only to the world, but also to the Church, and he has called the Church as well as the nation to repentance.

Whatever accusations of self-satisfaction might, in the past, have been brought against the English Church, there is no doubt that to-day she is a Church, humbled and penitent. Such a condition is full of hope for the future, but in the present it makes our work extremely difficult. We Anglican chaplains are hampered at every turn because our message is so apt to shade off into the vague and the indefinite. The heart and kernel of our Gospel remains unchanged: the Love of God and Hope for the World. God has sent us, as he sent His Son 'to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives,' but we are conscious, with penitence and shame, of our failure to actualise our message. We cannot stand detached and cry aloud that if only the world would come to us all would be well. In theory, in ideal, we know that a Church, a common allegiance to One Divine Master, can alone heal the world's divisions, but in practice

and in fact, we know that we are not ourselves, as a Church, as yet near enough to the Master to accomplish His work. And so we cannot speak to the people with that clear ringing note of authority which all would recognise as coming from the representative of God; but, on the other hand, we have now a unique opportunity of sharing with men a hundred intimate occupations of daily life, in a far closer and more natural way than was possible in peace time; and though we cannot yet speak *to* men with clear authority it may be that in being privileged to live and suffer *with* them we are learning a truer sympathy which may fit us better in the coming days to supply their deeper needs.

EIGHTH PAPER

SOME PRISONERS

'WHAT are you in for?'

It is a somewhat ambiguous question. The prison chaplain wanted to know the charge, but the prisoner with a keener eye for the things that matter takes a more practical view. 'Twenty-one days, sir. Ten more to go.'

The chaplain repeats his question in a different form.

'What have they sent you here for?'

'Well, sir, you see, it was this way. The sergeant-major . . .' Then follows a long and quite obviously untrue story of victimisation. It is obviously untrue, on the face of it, but in the dreary prison days the victim has had nothing else to think of, and turning it over in his mind, adding here a little and there a little, as he tells the story again and again, for the benefit of the corporal of the guard and each

successive prisoner in turn, he has come almost to believe it.

So the chaplain has to re-form his question yet again :

'What do they say you are in for?'

'Oh! they say as I was drunk, but I asks you, sir, could you get drunk on this 'ere French beer?'

The chaplain is unprepared with any answer on this knotty point, and the conversation becomes general upon the one subject on which all are agreed, the hopless inferiority of French beer to honest English ale. 'It 's cheap enough certainly, but if you 'ad a sovereign's worth you couldn't get drunk on it, not nohow. To tell you the truth, sir, I 've thought about it a lot, and I 've decided that it ain't worth belly-room.'

Presently the chaplain is able to break off from the general conversation and to get a little quiet talk with individuals in a corner. Many want to talk about themselves and their case, but it is noteworthy that the majority have no sense of grievance, except perhaps against the N.C.O. who gave evidence against them. The prevalent ideas of evidence are strange enough.

Some men who practically admit their guilt will yet wax righteously indignant over a trifling discrepancy between the evidence of two witnesses for the prosecution. As to their punishment, it is the 'tying up' which goes with field punishment that is most resented. Once, after a service at which we had sung one of the Passion hymns, I overheard one prisoner remark bitterly to another: 'And now they 're going to crucify us.' But for the most part, there is little or no sense of injustice, which is in marked contrast to the attitude of civil prisoners, and a striking tribute to the rough fairness of military law. The men know quite well that they have overstepped the mark and now they have got to pay for it. 'And that 's all about it.'

Some of the men are obviously old offenders, and it is improbable that the chaplain will find in their stories any vestige of truth. Others are clean-limbed, open-faced lads whom it is a tragedy to meet within the barred doors of a prison. One is a mere child. His offence: sleeping on sentry. It was his second offence, and so the court martial and the heavy sentence had been of course inevitable, but he looked as though he

ought to have been in bed, tucked up by his mother instead of standing sentry in the Flanders mud. Others are wild, over-vital lads under sentence for some disciplinary offence. Most of these, however, will go back to duty under the 'deferred sentence' scheme, that admirable arrangement which not only avoids the removal of the men from their units, but gives them the opportunity to recover their self-respect.

There was one especially, a lively Cockney, whose sheet was marked with a whole string of boyish offences, the last of which had landed him in prison. He was bored—rather—at being where he was, but not, I think, in the least ashamed. I met him again some months later. His battalion was moving to a new area, marching by one of the long unvarying main roads of France.

They were a strange untidy crowd, very different from the same battalion at a parade march at home. Most of the men carried some sort of parcel or sandbags full of odds and ends in addition to their official equipment. They were followed by five or six dogs, for when a battalion is on the march the village dogs nearly

always attach themselves and remain sometimes for many weeks. The men are for the most part convinced that all French people neglect or maltreat their household dogs, and so gladly share their own rations with such animals as care to attach themselves to them. The transport followed close behind, and in the place of honour, on the leading wagon, sits the pride of the regiment. To all appearances he is a very ordinary magpie, differing from others only in that his feathers are more untidy and disreputable than those of less privileged birds ; indeed his bedraggled looks have always reminded me of the jackdaw of Rheims after the great cardinal's curse had fallen upon him. But he is no ordinary bird, this magpie. Twice already he has been ' over the top.' Twice sitting on his master's shoulder he has gone with raiding parties into the German trenches, and returned safe. He is an honoured veteran now, and so he rides behind the regiment, careless of his appearance, swelling with conscious pride. The rain fell in torrents. Three of the four companies were trudging along, weary, depressed, and silent, without even the energy to swear. The last

company offered a marked contrast to the others. They marched full of spirits and with light and springing step, jesting and singing as they went. My friend of the prison was there in the leading four, and whenever the rain became more heavy and unbearable, or the silence of depression began to fall, he broke in with some music-hall catch or some apt jest.

His walk showed no signs of weariness, and though, like all the others he was heavily laden with pack and full kit, he was giving a lift for many miles to one of the newly attached dogs who showed some signs of lameness. At last the battalion arrived at its muddy destination and we could not but notice that his company was the only one that was not utterly exhausted.

Next morning, I happened to be in the doctor's improvised dressing station, a disused cow-byre, when my friend came to report himself. He was limping rather badly, but still wore the same inextinguishable smile.

'Sorry sir, but I 'm afraid I 've damaged my foot.'

The doctor, well used to 'scrimshanking,' was not sympathetic, but as soon as he had seen

the injury he realised that it was a genuine case. ' That 's bad. When did you do it ? '

' Well, sir, I 'd a nail in my boot two days ago, and the march yesterday finished it.'

The doctor expressed himself forcibly to the effect that the man was a fool not to have come to him before.

' Well, you see, sir, it was this way. I couldn't leave the boys just when we were going to be on the move, could I, sir ? '

Of such mixed stuff is human nature.

NINTH PAPER

ACTIVE SERVICE

In the rooms of a certain studious undergraduate of Cambridge a Missionary meeting was in progress. The visiting speaker was a little disappointed. Though the meeting had been well advertised, there were barely a dozen men to hear him. Comforting himself with the reflection that his hearers, however few, were earnest and religious men, he began to give them of his best. He spoke eloquently and well of the perils and anxieties of his far-away mission field, and his voice grew vibrant with enthusiasm, as he told of the childlike natives to whom, in love, he had given his life. Quite suddenly his eloquence was cut short by the most infernal clatter on the stairs outside. The indignant student to whom the rooms belonged opened the door to find out the cause. A number of young undergraduates, headed by a notorious ragger, had

collected most of the College baths and with infinite noise were tobogganing down the stairs with the sole purpose and intent of interrupting the pious and admirable meeting which was being conducted in the student's room. There could of course be no excuse for such conduct; apart from anything else it was disgraceful manners towards a visiting stranger. But what of the sequel? Some years later I met the missionary again, and heard from him that his former interrupter had become his most trusted lieutenant. The missionary was a man of discernment and common sense. He had taken the opportunity of the somewhat informal introduction, bided his time, and then found an occasion to put the claims of his work in such a way as appealed to the adventurous mind of his would-be opponent. 'But what of the student and the eleven other faithful and earnest men who came to your interrupted meeting?' I asked. The missionary's face clouded. 'I have seen little or nothing of any of these fellows since,' he answered, and obviously he was unwilling to follow up the subject.

That is a story and a memory which has come

often to my mind out here in France. We chaplains are faced with two chief obstacles to our work both among officers and men. First (and to avoid any risk of being regarded as a facile optimist, I would state it without qualification), there is, among very many, a definite preference for certain acts and habits known to be wrong, and a consequent refusal to submit to the exacting claims of Christ. That is the age-long struggle between Light and Darkness. It is not tragedy but spiritual war, and it was to be leaders and helpers in this warfare that we were ordained. It is in the second obstacle to our work rather than in the first that the elements of real tragedy are found, the conflict not of right with wrong, but of right with right.

Christianity, as the soldier all too often conceives it, is a negative thing. He has but rarely any idea of a positive religion. To him to be religious means not swearing, not drinking, and probably not smoking, and almost the only positive action which he regards it as involving, is attendance at Church. The result is, that religion so conceived does not appeal to the most vigorous type of men. There are, of course, to

be found in the Army splendid Christians, men with a really active religion, and these are the very pick, but, broadly speaking, most officers and N.C.O.'s would agree that the ordinary churchgoing religious Christians are not among their best. If that is true (and my own experience, for what it is worth, reluctantly compels me to endorse it), it is of course a fact of the utmost seriousness, for men are attracted to religion for the most part, not by doctrine, nor by preaching, but by example. If they see that the professing Christians among their comrades are not more but less effective as men, that they are not conspicuously more kindly and helpful and not at all more humble than others, they will not be attracted to the religion which such men profess, and so it comes about that men often reject Christianity (or what they conceive to be Christianity), not by reason of what is worst in them, but by reason of what is best.

The outstanding need, therefore, is to find some method of presenting the claims of Christianity in a way which will appeal to the more alive and vigorous men. At the University, so long as religion was thought to mean merely the

avoidance of certain pleasant things, and the attendance at stuffy meetings, its influence was almost nil, but whenever a man of strong personality was able to break down these deeply engrained prejudices and put it before men in a positive, claimful way as an appeal to join in a great adventure, it attracted an entirely different type of mind, and things began to happen.

In the Army, the assumption that religion is a negative thing is a prejudice incredibly strong. There will be no chance of undermining it, unless in Christian teaching there is a large shifting of emphasis from the negative to the positive. Such a change will involve first and foremost a greatly increased charity in judgment, for it can not be denied that the Christian has come to be thought of, as one who is likely to disapprove. The chaplain has constantly to repudiate the charge of being shocked, an accusation at which in nine cases out of ten he ought to be indignant. For surely it is better to be shocked at being thought shocked than to be shocked at almost anything else. The wonderful record of the Y.M.C.A. during this war, and its well-earned fame afford a useful illustration of the needed change

of emphasis. Before the war, whether fairly or not, men were apt to associate it with milk and water. The Christian young man was one who gave no trouble to his mother, one in whom his aunts rejoiced. The Y.M.C.A. itself had found its place in comic literature and in popular songs as a symbol of harmlessness, a place where it was 'safe' to be. In most men's minds Y.M.C.A. stood for something purely negative and rather soft. Since the war, the Association has shown its youth, its manhood, and its Christianity by rising to a great opportunity, and there are literally millions of young soldiers who will be eternally grateful to it, not negatively for what it is not, but positively for what it is and for what it has done for them.

So, on more important levels, if we are to appeal to what is strongest and best, it is essential that we should constantly put before men the positive claims and the active ideals of our religion, and we have, perhaps more than anything else, to disabuse their minds of the impression that we are always disapproving.

Nothing is more likely to help us in this direction than trying to attain a better understanding

of the religion of our Russian allies. There is no command which the Russian seems more conspicuously to obey than the precept of the Sermon on the Mount which bids us not to judge. Compare, for illustration, the literature of the two countries. Our English books are full of judgments. Starting at the bottom of the scale with publications, which perhaps have no right to be described as literature at all, the Sunday School story-book or the child's prize. They tell of wicked George and virtuous Tommy. You may, and probably do, disagree profoundly with the author's judgments. Virtuous Tommy may seem to you even more intolerable than wicked George, but you are left in no doubt as to the author's opinion ; she is judging all the time. Even in real literature, the element of judgment is conspicuous. There is usually no difficulty in seeing who is the hero whom the author judges worthy of admiration, who the villain whom he judges and condemns. The canons of Russian literary art seem quite different. There is little or no judgment. Instead there is infinite compassion and a wide-hearted desire to understand. The reader is confronted with large slices of

life, selected apparently quite uncritically. The author offers no judgment himself, nor is the reader asked to judge, only to try to understand. Such an attitude to life is the very antithesis of the disapproving habit, which is so engrained in English religion, and it seems much nearer the mind of the Master. There are signs of it in some of the modern school of English writers, whether influenced by Russian literature or not I do not know, but I doubt if any one uninfluenced by the thoughts of Russia could have ended a book as Mr. Patrick M'Gill ended his *Children of the Dead End* with Gourock Ellen's prayer.

It is just this power of uncensorious sympathy which is so delightfully characteristic of the British soldier, but which is unfortunately so lacking in much of our Christianity. In trying to avoid censoriousness, the chaplain is faced with another danger. The uncritical temper is profoundly Christian, but there are in the world, and conspicuously in the Army, two travesties of it, two counterfeits which sometimes take its place, and these, the chaplain, if he is to retain respect as well as popularity, needs most carefully to avoid.

There is the uncritical habit of mind which comes from not thinking, which takes things as they come. Thoughtless people do often obey the letter of the command ' Judge not,' but most certainly this idle drifting is very far from its spirit. Out here we are all in danger of becoming somewhat thoughtless, for the pressure of new experiences constantly piling themselves upon us is apt to make for a mere acceptance of them without any attempt to appraise their value.

There is also a falsely uncritical habit of mind which is the result of not caring. Many people are tolerant merely because they do not care. To them good and evil are indifferent. That, even more surely, is not according to the mind of Christ, that is not following the example of the Master who blazed out against sin and wickedness, of the Lamb whose wrath was terrible. It incurs the condemnation meted out by the Psalmist to the man who did not abhor that which is evil.

Christ would not judge because He loved too much, Gallio would not judge because he cared too little. The open-hearted tolerance of the young soldier, and the friendliness of the parson

who is a good sort, are often nearer to the indifference of Gallio than to the generosity of Christ.

In spite, however, of the danger of slipping into one or other of these counterfeits of the uncritical temper, true obedience to the spirit of the command 'Judge not' remains one of our greatest needs. Self-satisfaction and contempt of others nearly always go hand in hand, and it cannot be denied that in the past these two traits have been conspicuous in the English national character, and have accounted for our European unpopularity. The South African War made an enormous difference in this respect. The nineteenth-century Englishman believed, more or less vociferously, that he was worth five wretched foreigners. The three years' struggle against two small republics shook our complacency, and with the weakening of our self-satisfaction has come also a less critical, more respectful attitude of mind towards men of other nations.

The present war is making even more difference in this direction. Living in a foreign country is widening men's sympathies. There is no direction in which change has more forced itself upon

my notice than in the men's attitude towards our French allies. In the early months of the war I heard constantly from wounded soldiers at home the most foolish depreciation of the efforts and fighting efficiency of the French. Even the reminder that they were then holding nearly nine-tenths of the line, without any assistance from us, was unavailing to shake the engrained prejudice as to their inferiority.

To-day, with the memory of Verdun and the spectacle of the present French successes on the Somme fresh in our minds, such depreciation is no longer possible. But it is not only the valour and efficiency of our Allies that has undermined British self-complacency and criticalness. Men out here have learned in a marked degree respect for the enemy. We are not less determined to beat him than are comfortable and contemptuous editors at home, or those who collect subscriptions for the various anti-German, hate-preserving societies in England, but we can not withhold a tribute of respect from men who have withstood such terrific bombardments as we have witnessed in Flanders and in Picardy.

We have learnt too, from what we have seen,

something of the ugliness of national complacency. There is, I suppose, no doubt that the Germans are the most self-satisfied people on the earth. They are satisfied—the typical Prussian is complacent with his Kultur, his industry, and all that is his. Side by side with this self-satisfaction goes a complete contempt for the ideals of all other nations. It is of these two parents—self-satisfaction and critical contempt of others—that has been born the dread child of war, a war to impose the German ideal on the despised races of the earth.

National self-complacency and over-criticalness of others are perhaps breaking down. Unfortunately, whereas Christians should be leading the way, this markedly English characteristic has reappeared in English religion. The emphasis in our teaching on the purely negative precepts of the Ten Commandments is of course a legacy from Puritanism. Puritanism is, in these days, out of fashion, but it has left an extraordinarily deep mark upon our national religion. The result of such emphasis upon 'Thou shalt not' has been an inevitable tendency to produce a negative type of character. It

appeals to those whose minds find it easier passively to abstain from evil, and to disapprove of evil-doers, than to be energetic in the pursuit of good.

Out here, it is in active service that men have found themselves ; and it is religion, thought of not as a road to safety, but as active service towards God and man, that is most likely to appeal to them in the coming days.

TENTH PAPER

HONOUR WHERE HONOUR IS DUE

WAR, with all its myriad evils, is admitted to have one attendant compensation, in the character results which it sometimes produces. In those who are taking part in it, it has evoked splendid qualities of endurance and heroism. But it is not only the characters of those who play an active part that are enlarged and strengthened. In those who, by reason of age or sex or occupation are compelled to be more or less passive spectators, it has stirred to a flame the quality of admiration—that quality, which, when rightly directed, is perhaps the most rejuvenating and ennobling of spiritual forces.

The purpose of this paper is most certainly not to diminish the volume of admiration and honour which you at home so generously accord to the men at the front. It is, rather, a study in

prejudices, an attempt to suggest certain directions in which there is a lack of proportion and a certain capriciousness in the lavish bestowal of your admiration ; and it seeks to establish the claim of one class of men in particular to the principal place in your honour and regard.

You in England pay no honour at all to Germany and the German soldiers. We in Picardy have, I think, a truer view. We know, as well as you, that vile and cruel things have been, and still are done by the German Army, but we cannot withhold some measure of respect from its soldiers. We have seen bombardments such as you at home cannot possibly conceive. We have seen trenches battered out of all recognition. We have seen places where there are no longer fields marked with many shell holes, but holes with bare scraps of field between them. Sometimes indeed the bombardment has been so intense that the shell holes are no longer separable one from the other, but the whole area is one churned mass of destruction. And yet, after it all, in spite of it all, these iron men are still there with their machine guns and their unconquerable courage. Honour where honour is due.

We know, as well as you, that many, perhaps most, Germans are blinded by hate and prejudice and pride. But we have seen the heroic work done by some captured stretcher bearers and medical orderlies. We have seen them, working all day long, under heavy fire, helping to rescue *our* wounded. Such work is done of course under compulsion, but when we see the devoted and energetic way in which it is carried out, we cannot but feel that to the men who do it some measure of respect and honour is due.

You at home pay an unstinted tribute of admiration to Anzacs, Canadians, and South Africans. And surely you are right. Nothing can excel their valour nor detract from the splendour of the loyalty which has brought them to the service of the Commonwealth, their Commonwealth as well as ours. Irish Brigades and kilted regiments appeal to your imagination. The Guards recall memories of the ancient pride of Britain, while the new Armies stir in you a new pride and a new thankfulness. Most truly are all these worthy of your admiration. But do you sometimes forget the honest stolid English

county regiments, the regiments of the Line, who bear perhaps most of the burden ? Honour where honour is due.

At home, you wax noisily enthusiastic over airmen who save you and your homes from Zeppelins. You lavish upon them honours and huge money rewards. You are right, for the deeds of these men are great and gallant deeds, but are you sure that it is their gallantry, and not your selfishness and fears, that accounts for the greatness of your gifts ? Do you remember with equal generosity and gratitude the men who, not just once or twice, on the exceptional occasion of a raid, but, day after day, over the enemy's lines, take far greater risks, and accomplish not less important tasks ? Do you realise the magnificent work that airmen in Picardy are daily doing ? Flying over hostile guns, carrying news, directing the artillery, descending right down to use their own machine guns, coming so low, that, as a letter found on a dead German put it, ' you would almost think that they were going to pull you out of the trenches ' ? Do you pay to these men as much honour as to those

who, with less risk, but a little more conspicuously, have saved your own skins ?

You honour heroic doctors, stretcher bearers, and all the varied representatives of the Royal Army Medical Corps. You are very right to do so. Theirs is the glorious work of trying to lighten a little the calamity which human wickedness has brought upon the world. Like every one else in the Army they have their long periods of idleness and inaction. More often than most, their work is in safe places, far behind the lines at clearing stations or base hospitals. Sometimes, however, they are called upon to cope with a huge inrush of work, operating or dressing wounds for long hours at a stretch, sometimes they have to face danger to the full, and nobly have they risen to the call. To take one instance alone, it would be difficult to exaggerate the strain which is sometimes placed on squads of stretcher bearers, already, perhaps, tired out by many journeys. Very tenderly they lift the heavy burden to their shoulders. Slowly and carefully they march. The physical strain of the long ' carry,' often through deep and clinging mud is

heavy enough, but a fuller measure of honour is due when you remember that very often they have to pursue their slow, even course along a shell-swept road. The unburdened messenger can run past dangerous corners, or take hurried shelter in a convenient shell hole. The carrying party must go on, though shells burst very near. Often and often a whole party has been simply blown to pieces, and nothing left of stretcher or of bearers or of borne. All honour to the men of the R.A.M.C. and to battalion stretcher bearers.

Honour the gunners. Their work is very heavy. Hour after hour, day after day, week after week, they strain at the great shells and labour at the great guns. It is they who with unresting but untiring diligence are preparing victory in the only possible way. A dreadful and unlovely way it is, but experience, dearly bought, has shown that there is no other way than this blighting and blasting of the road along which our infantry are to advance.

Honour the men behind the gunners. At one

time, we out here never spoke of the munition workers except in slighting terms, and many of us still feel that it is wrong that those who work in safety should receive wages so disproportionately greater than those of the infantryman in the daily danger of the line. But in these grim days in Picardy we have learnt to place so much reliance upon the overwhelming supplies which their industry is producing that our feeling towards them is daily changing.

You honour the men of the various special branches of the Army. The galloping ammunition wagon, the recklessly driven transport car, the undefeated despatch-carrying motor-cycle, all these figure largely in the illustrated papers. You do well to honour the men who drive them, for though they have the tremendous moral help which comes from movement and action, and though their stay in the shell area is of limited duration, they are brave and gallant men whose work is vital to our success. Honour the brave.

You in England, or some of you, have even gone so far as to forgo your traditional right to

crab the clergy. You pay us some honour for the work which we are doing as chaplains, for the ordinary dangers which all of us are running, for the special risks 'outside the scope of their ordinary work and duty' which some few adventurous spirits have incurred. And I think you are right, for though our risks are infinitely less than those of the infantry, we have this one added burden from which they are free. The soldier is sent, under clear orders, to a trench, and he must hold it till he is relieved. He has no doubt as to what it is his duty to do. In times of emergency the chaplain can refer to no superior and he has no orders. Each moment he must choose for himself between conflicting claims, resisting alike the temptation to do conspicuous things simply because they are conspicuous, and the other temptation to stay too far behind when his friends and companions are in the place of danger.

You honour the wounded. You strew their returning carriages with roses and with green. Your newspapers agitate to mark them with strips of gold. You are lavish in your hospitality.

'The men in blue,' so conspicuous in your streets, you have made your special charge. You do well to pay them every honour. Many of those who laugh and jest at your concerts will never know a day's real health again. Many who are so gay and bright in your daytime visits to the wards pass the long nights in wakefulness and pain. Honour the wounded. You, who see them only in the trim wards of a home hospital, can have no real conception of all that they went through between the coming of the bullet and the blessed, longed-for rest of the comfortable wards in which you see them.

There are many stages of suffering through which they must pass. An advance is made. Slowly and quietly, like soldiers on parade, the men are crossing the No-Man's-Land, unhurrying, though they pass through a fierce enemy fire, always with the haunting fear that if they press on too far they will come into our own, as yet, unlifted barrage. Several shells fall harmless, and then one lands right in the middle of an advancing platoon. Some of the men do not move again ; others, wounded perhaps in arm or leg, walk or crawl back into our own lines, though

many a man thus slightly wounded has been hit again and killed before ever he reached a dressing station to have his lesser hurt attended to. Some have but the strength to crawl or roll to such protection as is afforded by the nearest shell hole, and lie there for hours, perhaps for days, before help comes. And then, when the wound has become stiff and sore, there is the long tedious 'carry' down a winding trench to the regimental aid post, and on again, after the shortest of delays, to a horse ambulance which takes them over the last piece of roadless track to the nearest advanced dressing station. There they are dressed again and transferred to motor ambulances which bump and jolt them along makeshift roads to a casualty clearing station —their first place of real rest. Thence after a short stay, by rail and steamer and rail again to the longed-for hospital at home. Honour the wounded.

Honour the dead. You must honour those who have given all they had to give. We who have lived with them up to the last, we who have gone in and out with them in the fullness of their

vitality and strength, and then have knelt in mute prayer beside their broken bodies, we are too near to sorrow. The bereaved at home, whose hopes are shattered, but whose pride remains ; theirs is the overwhelming sadness. It is you who must teach us the value and the worth-whileness of their gift. It is you who by the honour that you pay them must help us so to live, for them, that the England of the future may be worthy of the sacrifice which they have made.

. . . . . .

I have spoken of various classes and subdivisions of men. All of these are deserving of honour, all of these and many more besides : the waiting cavalry, the crews of the mirth-provoking tanks, the watchful staff, and all the various branches of army administration which are designated by indecipherable initials ; for all are working and suffering in the same cause. From none of these would I withdraw one fragment of the praise which they receive, but there is one class for which I wish to claim supreme honour, one class to which I do not feel that sufficient attention is paid, one class to which

praise and gratitude most pre-eminently is due. The unwounded infantryman. There are some few still who have been out since the very beginning. ' Mons 'eroes ' we call them, but to-day they are very few in number. There are more who have endured the hardships of two winters, and very many who have ' stuck it ' for a year or more. It is to such as these that most of all our gratitude is due, for it is they who bear the long burden of the war unbroken save by short, uncertain, and precarious leaves. A wound is a serious thing, but so great is the strain that the desire for a ' Blighty one ' is a most commonly expressed wish. Nine-tenths of such talk, no doubt, is talk and nothing more, but there are times when, in nearly all of us, the sight of a homeward-bound hospital train stirs feelings, not of pity, but of real jealousy.

Let me try, by selecting one or two incidents, to bring before you something of what the daily life of the infantryman means, that you may understand why it is to him, as he ' sticks it ' here, that your special honour and your special gratitude is due. I will not write of winter in the trenches, for it has been so often described

before, only be sure, as you read this book before your study fire, that mere imagination cannot conceive the depths of either its misery or its mud ; and if you were to come out here now you would cry with the Queen of Sheba that the 'half had not been told you' ; perhaps also like the same royal lady 'there would be no more spirit left in you.' Even in the trenches, though the change seems slower in coming, winter gives place to spring. The welcome sun brings alleviation from some of the worst miseries, of cold and slush, but it brings no relief from the unending dreariness of the daily round of trench monotony.

After many months of the unchanging trench life came the long-expected summons to the Somme. There were long, hot, dusty marches, and then one evening, just as the sun was setting we came up over the crest of the hill and had our first view of the famous tower of Albert. It was a memorable moment, for the tower was already familiar to us from pictures and photographs in the illustrated papers sent to us from home. It symbolised for us the Great Offensive in which we were at last to take our share. Presently

we passed right under the church, and the wonderful statue, undamaged in itself, but bending over at more than a right angle from its original position, seemed to be extending its arms as though in benediction over the stricken country. That night it was difficult to sleep. We, who for months had seen only the troops holding the trenches on our immediate left and right, and not much of them, were now in the most crowded area of all, where a bare field was considered ample billeting accommodation for a whole brigade. We had grown accustomed to noise, but not yet to the unceasing roar of such an accumulation of guns as the world had never even contemplated before. And so we lay wakeful under the cold light of a perfect moon, and as we looked backwards towards Albert, and forward to woods already named in history, there came, I think to all of us, a sense of greatness as we realised that we were at last on that spot where the fate of the world was being decided. To some of us too there came another thought, that this was just the corner of God's earth upon which the prayers and intercessions of millions of faithful Christians were being concentrated, that this

was the picture which many a wakeful woman at home was trying to bring before her anxious eyes.

Then there followed a fortnight, a summer fortnight on the Somme, when the troops were tried to the very limit of human endurance. It was not a time of great attacks or of conspicuous advances, but the men had the harder task of holding on under a ceaseless hurricane of shells. When there is no advance to be made and nothing active to be done there is nothing more nerve-racking than the long waiting when you can only sit and wonder whether the next shell will come just that much nearer and end it all. The ration-carrying parties worked bravely and well, but the enemy barrage was so terrific that the arrival of food was inevitably uncertain and irregular. The water too, carried in petrol tins, was nauseous and disgusting. And so the long days and longer nights wore on, till at last the relief came and we were taken out to rest and refit. A short march took us to the train which was to bring us to our rest area. It was no railway journey such as you at home enjoy and grumble at, but incredibly slow and unbelievably uncomfortable, stopping every few yards and

jerking on again, taking many hours to cover a few miles. All of us were on the bare floor of cattle trucks ; the officers were not so crowded as the men, but even they, middle-aged colonels included, lay close together on the wooden floor. The men travel forty-five in a truck, and their full packs make them yet more crowded. They are restless too, for almost every one is suffering from the soldier's most indestructible enemy. Unpleasant to think of ! Yes, but these are not polite paragraphs from Piccadilly but papers from Picardy, earth's facsimile of hell, and you must expect the minor unpleasantness as well as the great sadness.

Then there followed a few weeks of rest and quiet while new drafts were trained and the old refreshed. It was a time spent in the pleasant companionship which supplies whatever there is of joy and happiness in the grim life of war. For many of us, perhaps for most, these weeks were the happiest which we spent in France, indeed their happiness was the material out of which the sorrow of the coming days was formed, ' As the memory of a dream which now is sad because it has been sweet.'

The good time could not last for ever, and soon, all too soon, the order ' Back to the Somme ' was received. The newspapers would have you believe that such an order comes like a message of freedom to hounds straining at the leash, but it is not so. The infantryman goes, when the order comes, without hesitation, because he knows that it is his duty, because he knows that he must, but the joy of battle and the eagerness to be in the middle of it all again is but rarely found outside the mind of a newspaper correspondent. Another weary train journey and another march brought us back nearly to the same place as that in which we had fought before, but there were two great differences. A glorious summer had given way to a too early autumn ; during our first ' time up ' we had known nothing but sun and heat, now we were to experience the rain and the wind and the pitiless mud. Also, whatever of spice the novelty of our first period had supplied, was gone now. We knew what lay before us, and we knew that it was hell.

This time, our period in Picardy lasted five weeks, sometimes in the front line, sometimes in support, sometimes in reserve, but never entirely

out of range of the enemy's guns, never free from the roar of our own. During this time, though we took part in one great and successful battle, and though we were almost constantly in contact with the Germans, our losses were not, until the very end, particularly heavy, though, all the time, there was a steady drain of sick and wounded and killed. Then, just a week before the end, we were taken right back, almost out of range, for a few days' rest, and we began to hope that our work in Picardy was finished, but once again the order came to move up into the line. If there are among my readers those who still believe the rose-coloured stories of the war, I would ask them to read carefully the description of that day's advance. The battalion formed up in the dark at four in the morning (summer time). The rain came down with a violence that I never remember before or since, and very soon every man was soaked to the skin. We had not very far to go for our first halt, when we reached a camp of tents in time for a late breakfast. Here, under such shelter as we could find, we stayed most of the day, and in the afternoon moved off again for a long tedious march along

crowded muddy roads down which the water streamed as in the bed of a shallow river. So far we had been on roads all the time and the 'cookers' had followed us, so at the next halt the men were able to have hot tea and a meal. Then, a little before eight in the evening, we left the road and began to move forward up into the line. We had been wet through since four in the morning. You too have been wet through out shooting, or on country walks, and, though you have grumbled, you have really rather enjoyed it. You have kept before your eyes the prospects of the hot bath, the dry clothes, the study fire, and an egg with your tea. But for these men there were no such prospects. It was midnight before they reached their destination, and then for them there was no warmth or change —only the muddy shelter of a battered front line trench. Our march was very slow. Picture to yourself the load that each man carries. Pack, rifle, and full equipment for all. Most carry in addition other loads which it is perhaps not permissible to describe. Every man has his dripping waterproof sheet wrapped round him, and all wear heavy steel hats. In sketches,

supposed to be made at the front, more often than not the men are wearing their old cloth caps, but gladly though we return to them when we are in rest or in reserve, I have never seen a man at the real front in Picardy without his protecting helmet. They are heavy and cumbersome, but most of us have seen too many cases where they have saved men's lives to be willing to part with them whatever their weight. With his many burdens, marching in mud is no easy task for the infantryman. You talk at home of being up to your knees in mud, you mean really that it is sometimes up to your ankles, and very occasionally splashes to your knees. Here it is an understatement. At almost every step the men had, with a definite effort, to pull their tired legs out of the deep sucking mud, and there was scarcely a man but fell time and again flat on the greasy mess. And so, at midnight, they arrived, and for five comparatively quiet days they held the line. Once more they came out, only a little way back this time, for thirty-six hours of rest. Fortunately it was fine, and the men were able to get dry and warm and to scrape some of the mud from their clothes. It was a

Sunday, and we had a service there in God's temple of the open-air, which was to be for many a last communion, a viaticum for the last long journey. On Sunday night they moved up again.

Next day came the great achievement, a success with which all England rang, a victory which will be written in letters of gold in the regimental records for all time, and which, while this life lasts, will be remembered with tears in many an English home.

So our work in Picardy is for the present over, and we go back a weakened battalion to the comparative quiet of ordinary trench-life. Honour where honour is due. The infantryman does not complain. The work has to be done and he knows that he has to do it, but it is a very heavy burden that he is bearing. The newspapers give, I think, quite a wrong impression of his attitude. Special correspondents would have you believe that the infantry soldier invariably goes both in and out of action with song and jest and merry laughter. Perhaps that was true at the very first. Many of those who enlisted in the summer of 1914 went in the spirit of men expecting an

open-air holiday. With the wounded, cheeriness has become almost a convention. They read the papers and they know what is expected of them. Also, by the time you talk with them, they are far away from the strain and pressure. Here, on the spot, that light-hearted gaiety has almost gone. The men are bright enough in rest billets or at the base, but there is no longer any pretence that they are yearning to be back in the fight, there is no longer any attempt to deny that they hate and dread their turn in the line. You are told that we go in and out of action with song and laughter. You expect such stuff as that, and so, of course, you are supplied with what you want. But it is not true. How could we go into action in such a spirit when we know the horrors that lie before us ? Still less could we come out with laughter. We are not such callous brutes as that. Great victories mean a great price, and we pay it in our friends. For you, apart from an individual here and there whom you knew and loved, the casualty lists are just numbers. It is not so for us. After a battle in which the regiment has been engaged there is no group of men sitting round an evening

fire but is conscious of tragic gaps. For us they are not just numbers of killed, of wounded and of missing. It is Harry whom we shall not see on earth again. Jack whose days of active life are over. Old Bill who always kept things lively—poor old Bill. Tom, 'What's become of Tom?' no one seems to know. And a host of others who were our friends and our daily companions.

So through the long months, the infantryman who remains bears the heaviest burden, his load of discomfort, dirt, and danger, the loss of friends and of happy companionship. Have I justified my claim that it is to him that our highest honour and our deepest gratitude is due? Still he holds on, for our sakes and for the England of our sons, carrying to a final end the work which his dead friends began.

Honour where honour is due.

ELEVENTH PAPER

A NIGHT IN THE CRATERS[1]

WE are to meet at the cross roads. 'Oxford Circus,' the noticeboard calls it. Sloane Street, Park Lane, and High Street run into it, with disconcerting inconsistency. There are no motor buses nor busy taxis in this Oxford Circus of ours. A shell-torn tree stands in the middle of it and all is silence.

The last glimmer of a June sunset is fading in the west as the men arrive. They come in small parties, for their road lies along an exposed corner which is not healthy to pass in large bodies—Dead Man's Corner, we call it, with an unreal smile. It is a place in full view of the German artillery. Last week twenty men were killed there by a single shell. The week before

[1] This paper is the only one written before our brigade had taken its turn in the Somme offensive. Much of it would have been different had it been written later, but I have left it unaltered as a record of an early impression.

the wreck of a transport wagon and the blood of horses lay for some time by the roadside, till the workers of the night cleared it all away. When we can, we go by another road, and when duty forces us to pass it we make a jest of it, but unconsciously the step quickens, and when we are past we breathe a sigh of relief from a strain which we had hardly acknowledged even to ourselves. Now the order has gone forth that men going that way must proceed in small parties.

'Oxford Circus' is the arranged place, where the company is to be re-formed. 'All present, sir!' The sergeant's words mean more to the waiting captain than he would like to admit. Rifles are loaded, and the company begins to move off towards the long communication trench which leads to our destination. It is dark now and difficult to distinguish clearly, but there is a martial sound; the tramp of armed men and a military jingle. The sound conjures up forgotten pictures of the pomp of war, of spurs and rattling scabbards, but as the men come closer the illusion fades, and the facts emerge out of the deceptive darkness. The sound we heard is but

the clink of pick on shovel, for we are all navvies now. These men, drawn from all classes, many of them quite unaccustomed to manual labour, are content now to lay down their rifles by their side and to work all the night through with spade and pick.

Two days ago the sector to which we are going was a model of perfectly constructed trenches. The front line had been sandbagged with months of labour, the dug-outs were furnished and established residences, some of them even being fitted with electric light. Last night the enemy's mines ruined the work of months. To-night we are going to begin it all again. And so the futile round goes on.

They are not our trenches, we are merely a working party from the next sector of the line. We are coming to help, but our welcome is not encouraging. The battalion who are holding the trenches, or what is left of them, are expecting their relief to-night, and the arrival of our party raises their hopes: 'Are you the A's?' a voice asks out of the darkness. 'No, only a working party of the B's.' No darkness is thick enough, no silence deep enough to conceal

the disappointment and disgust of the waiting men.

Guides direct us to our places. The men are allotted to different sections of the great craters and begin to work in the silence and the darkness. From time to time great shells burst near us. There are no trenches left in which to shelter, and at frequent intervals we lie flat upon the ground, to get up sticky with chalk, wet and dirty. 'Any one hurt?' 'All well, sir.' 'Carry on.'

All through the night we move from party to party, admiring the men's work, promising a rum ration when it is over, and trying to encourage them. There is much to admire. Men work hard and need little urging when they are working on the surface and digging cover for themselves.

Sometimes a great flare light glows in the sky. We stand rigid and immovable, looking out over the great heaps of chalk, glistening white in the unnatural glare and over the wide yawning craters. It is strangely like a photograph of the mountains of the moon.

One party is a little worried. Theirs is an

'insanitary spot.' Too many big shells have burst near them. But a young officer, a boy almost, strolls about, unconcernedly on the top above the digging men. Fear in his heart—sick and deadly fear—but not a sign on his face, and the men turn to again with a new courage.

Presently the soft rain turns into a heavy downpour. The new turned chalk begins to fall back into the fresh dug trench. The men swear softly as they continue to work in silence. But now, a quickening of the breeze and the first lightening of the sky heralds the dawning of the day—the day when, in this topsy-turvy world of ours, no man can work—and the men gather up their tools and file quickly out. There is no delay now and no hesitation. This work on the craters is work at the mouth of hell, and we hurry from it the moment the order for release is given.

Covered with chalk and clay, wet to the skin, laden with rifles and tools, we trudge back in the opening day. Once out on the road, silence is broken and cigarettes are lighted. Thrice blessed cigarette! Often it is the one thing that stands between the soldier and utter misery. The cigarette out here plays many parts, and fills

many voids. It has often to take the place of food or drink, to be a substitute for sleep, and to be our only fire.

We do not laugh or jest much on the way out. It is only in the newspapers that the soldier is always bright. We are too tired and perhaps too full of unexpressed thankfulness to God, but we talk a little, disjointedly, and with many pauses. Mostly we talk about the rain and the Boche and the general beastliness of it all. One old soldier indulges in a sardonic jest. He is aching with rheumatism, overburdened with tools and equipment, and can barely move his soaked and mud-caked body even at the slow pace at which we march. 'Remember that picture, sir,' and he reminds me of the portrait of a clean and smiling youth with which the recruiting authorities at one time covered the walls of London. ''Appy and satisfied—looks like it, don't it, sir?' But it is all grousing, not grumbling. No one doubts the necessity of it all. Not till next day did I hear a note of bitterness, and then it was the expression of a thought which is uppermost in many men's minds to-day. 'It 's got to be done, and we 'as to do it. But the infantryman as

'as all the danger 'as all the 'eavy work as well and none of the pay. Them fellows down at the base as never sees a —— shell are getting their three and four bob a day, and at 'ome they 're making enough money to sink yer in liquor and strikes for more.'

What about the solidarity of labour after the war? Will the old division into workers and capitalists be complicated by a more acutely felt division between those who suffered and those who made profit from the war?

TWELFTH PAPER

IN A REGIMENTAL AID POST

MOST of these papers have been written during periods of rest 'behind the lines.' This Somme fighting is so terrific that long unbroken spells of it would be beyond human endurance, and so we go back, at intervals, for short periods of rest, and, in the case of some battalions, very literally, of re-creation. It is at such times, in the comfort and comparative luxury that is afforded by the fourth part of a tent, or one corner of a farm-house room, that these papers have been, for the most part, put together. I want, however, to write just one here, in the thick of it, on some dirty scraps of paper, torn from a damp and dog-eared book.

This paper is going to be dull. Those who look for thrilling adventures, for tales of heroism and hairbreadth escapes, must leave it unread. It is my purpose to give a faithful record of three

days in a regimental aid post, during a period when I happen to have the time to write it down. There have been, of course, other days when every moment has been fully occupied, but this record of dullness relieved by occasional horror is more truly typical than would be the account of pressure and of rush.

We are sitting on the westward slope of a long shallow valley. Our home is a surface dug-out. It shields us from flying 'pieces,' but we owe our safety less to that, than to the slope of the friendly hill behind us; on the eastward slope neither trench nor dug-out can ensure protection. All along the valley are many guns. The more distant keep up a never ceasing roll, with occasional deeper thuds. Almost exactly in front of us, stretching across both slopes, are two batteries of field artillery. There is no thud or roll here, but a sharp, ear-deafening bark. They are very close, and the flame of them blows hot to the very mouth of our dug-out. Immediately outside the entrance is a rubbish heap. It is not an official 'dump' or collecting place, but one that has just happened. Wounded men, coming here to be dressed, have thrown down their equipment,

and other things have been added to the pile. There are tins of all shapes and sizes, blood-soaked rags, live bombs, belts, bayonets, sand-bags, and a hundred other cast-off possessions. Also there are flies. It is a very kingdom of Beelzebub. His myriad subjects blacken half the pile. Our battalion is further on, and we wait here and hope unfeignedly for idleness. Fortunately, they are for the present in an easy place, and we have little work to do ; and so we wait.

We arrived in the dark, and all night long the near guns barked and the far guns thundered ; while every now and then we heard one of the really heavy shells travelling high over our heads. When you are living close to the harsh clap of field guns, the passing of a great shell has an extraordinary air of dignity and serenity, almost of peace. You do not hear the explosion of the gun, nor of the arriving shell, only the quiet unhurrying progress of the invisible death far up in the skies.

The first morning broke clear and bright, and for a little space a German observation balloon hung in the sky, and then for two hours the valley was shelled without cessation. Shell after

shell came, searching, searching for the batteries which all night long had been pouring death into the German lines. Crouched in the entrance of our dug-out we sat and watched. They fell on the ridge behind us and they plastered all the valley and the eastward slope. Flying mud and a few pieces reached us where we sat and made us take a personal interest in the spectacle we were watching ; but thanks to our sheltering hill we came through it safe and unharmed. Time after time the shells burst almost in the gun pits or the trench, but twice only—or rather, three times—did they take effect. By one shell, two gunners on the opposite slope were killed. In the trench behind us, one man was half buried by a fall of earth from a collapsing trench. They dug him out of the loosened soil, and a stretcher bearer was helping him away (for he was badly shaken) when yet another shell burst quite near and finished him. It seemed a strange chance that with hundreds of shells falling harmless two should come to a single man ; but that is just the unevenness of war. Sometimes hundreds of shells will do no harm, another time a single shell will kill a dozen men. Sometimes one will

burst near a group standing close together, and leaving the nearer men untouched, a piece will kill just one man in the very middle of the group. By 10.30 the storm was over. Three graves in the valley are its only record here. Later in the day I buried the bodies just as they were, wrapped in their soldier's coats, and, as I write, I can see three new crosses facing us down there in the valley.

For the rest of the day things were fairly quiet. Sometimes for ten minutes together a parcel of mixed shells arrived, H. E., shrapnel and gas, but our own guns went on, undiscouraged, all the time. Their sound is the inevitable background of life down here in Picardy, and though their noise be deafening we count things quiet if the enemy is not replying. So far not one of our own men has come down, and so in the afternoon the doctor and two orderlies go up to battalion headquarters to inquire. He comes back rejoicing. All is quiet there, and there has not been any shelling nor a single casualty. And so, unmindful perhaps of the little crosses below us, which mark the last resting-place of men of other regiments, we sit down in great

spirits to our tea. We have scarcely begun when an orderly comes hurrying in to tell us that just after the doctor left, one shell had fallen close to battalion headquarters and taken a toll of nine casualties. Two hours of shelling here in the morning results in a total of three casualties, one single shell there in the afternoon accounts for nine. What wonder if men are apt to become somewhat fatalistic. Eight out of the nine are bandaged, and walk or are carried to the ambulance, one alone needs no more help in this world. After they have gone, we settle down to wait and watch again, the doctor, the orderlies and I, a somewhat saddened group. All day long we talk. It is mostly reminiscences ; unutterably wearisome, infinitely dull, but talking passes the time and deadens thought, and after all nobody need listen. It would be monotonous indeed, except for occasional short bursts of shelling, and though one hates them, they are almost welcome as a relief from the dreary waiting.

The long day ends at last, and the long noisy night passes to another morning. This, too, is uneventful in blessed contrast to other times, when all day and all night we have been busy

with steady streams of wounded men. For these few days the battalion is in reserve, and they seem to have found a quiet place. This day there has been but one incident. In the morning there were men walking about everywhere in the valley. It seemed a rash thing to do with German observation balloons ever on the watch. Nemesis came, but, as so often in this world, it did not come to those who seemed to be courting disaster, but to those who were taking right and reasonable precautions. In front of the batteries and on the eastward slope there runs a single trench and it is packed close with men. Yesterday, dozens of shells fell near it and did no harm. This morning one shell came over and landed exactly in the trench. Planks, earth, a sheet of corrugated iron—and something else—flew into the air. As the smoke cleared three or four figures rushed into the open. One man holds his back and moans piteously as he runs, another with his hand at his head calls insistently for stretcher bearers, while a third runs with his arm hanging limp at his side ; and since even from the tragedies of war the comic is never entirely absent, leading them all and

running at a sprinter's pace is one man, almost if not quite, unhurt. The wounded run across the valley to our post and their needs are soon attended to, but presently out of the broken trench they bring the crumpled mutilated bodies of six others. Later in the day six more crosses stand there in the valley. My cemetery grows fast these days.

The last day and night of our stay was even more uneventful. No shells came our way at all, but away on the right there was heavy firing and all day long our valley road was a veritable Via Dolorosa. Badly wounded men limped slowly along or helped others worse than themselves. The lightly wounded hurried on, intent only on getting out of it all to some place of rest and quiet, and at intervals slow moving parties carried laden stretchers. Towards evening a pitiless rain turned the already dirty tracks into seething slush. Soon after midnight we joined the battalion, who came slipping and sliding, mud-covered and soaked, on their way out for three days' rest. Then back again to the mud and the cold, the shells—and the glories of the greatest battle in history.

THIRTEENTH PAPER

WHAT IS TRUTH?

DEATH has become a common sight of late. Death from gas. Death from wounds. Death from shock. Death. But the countless sorrows of the Somme have not in the least served to obliterate from my mind the memory of the first time I saw a man killed by a German bullet. It was just at 'stand to,' that twilight hour when every one has to be on the alert against surprise attacks. A tall man came out from some corner where he had been snatching a short period of rest, for in the trenches we get our rest in bits, where and when we can. He was still rubbing the sleep from his eyes. It was in a trench, further north, where our lines and the German drew very close. The newly awakened man came into the bay where we were standing. Before going to his post, he stood up on the fire-step, for one moment, to look round.

Familiarity breeds carelessness, but in his case he was not out of the shelter of the trench for more than a very few seconds. A German sniper must have had his rifle ready trained on the very spot, for with appalling suddenness, and before ever we heard the report of the shot, the newly awakened man fell backwards and lay silent in his last sleep with a bullet in his temple.

The sight of him lying there brought vividly to my mind a picture which at one time was very popular at home—not by resemblance but by pathetic contrast. You remember the picture of the Great Sacrifice which at one time was to be seen in every shop window. A young lad lies on the ground. A tiny bullet hole shows in his temple, and from it flows the faintest streak of blood. Over him hangs the shadowy figure of the Crucified. ' Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.'

It was contrast rather than resemblance that brought the picture to my mind that night. Like the young lad in the picture, the man whom I saw die had a bullet wound in the temple, but there the likeness ceased. Here was no calm death, but a ghastly mess of blood and brains

and mud, on his face and in the surrounding trench; and in the stark horror of the moment I could not see the Crucified at all. Before they carried him away we gathered round the body, and I said a few words of prayer for him and for those who loved him. There was a minute or two of hushed silence, and then the men went to their allotted posts. Five minutes later I walked round with the company commander, and on our way we found a group of men with fixed bayonets gaily chasing rats behind the sandbags.

What is truth? Which is nearer to reality? The picture which ignores the material ugliness and insists on the spiritual worth of the sacrifice, or the muddy bloody facts, and the rat hunt and forgetting? It is easy to reject the picture as unrealistic, but on the other hand the weight of visible material ugliness is apt to obscure the finer shades of truth. There was the rat hunt, but first, there was the little time of hushed and solemn silence. The dirt and ugliness of life is so insistent that we have had to make a jest of it. Bairnsfather cartoons are the most popular adornment of every mess. He has done great

service in laughing away sham heroics, and in drawing ugliness simply as the ugly thing it is, but I doubt if his work is wholly for good. Raemakers, though less popular, is greater, not only as artist, but as prophet, for while he has not disguised the ugliness, he has made us feel the greatness too. It is well for you at home that you should realise how unbeautiful is our life somewhere in France ; it is well for us out here to laugh at ourselves ; but it will be a real loss if we seek relief from ugliness only in seeing its funny side, and forget its deeper meaning. We shall not forget the tragedies, but we may forget their value. Sham heroics make no appeal to the sure instincts of the active soldier ; fine writing in the newspapers will nearly always provoke his contemptuous mirth, but at times of stress or when emotion has, in any way, broken through his reserve, he will show you that the ideal side of war is still a reality for him. It is among the officers that there is more danger lest the dirt and discomfort of life should overwhelm their appreciation of its deeper meaning. Certainly you hear more cynicism about the origin and causes and importance of the war

among officers than among men, but, of course, this may only mean that their reserve is stronger, and that with them it is harder than with the men to get behind the material pose with which we English love to disguise our deeper feelings, and which earns for us among our enemies the designation of hypocrites.

We are often told that the men who have faced death in the trenches will return to civil life with a quickened spiritual outlook. It is possible, and in the case of some it is certain, but on the other hand the material ugliness of war is here so horribly in the foreground that it is just as likely that in many of us, our sense of the spiritual will be, not awakened, but deadened. We know now that a description of war which would have us believe it all glory and grandeur is very far from truth. On the other hand, its obvious ugliness is equally far from being the whole truth, though it is hard for us to see beyond it. It is you at home who must help us to have constantly before our eyes the ideal side of war. You will do it best, not by blind hero worship, nor by thoughtless applause, but by raising your own standard of life and service, so that the

England for which men have fought and died may be more worthy of their sacrifice. You have made heroes of your soldiers, you will serve them best, and best show your gratitude by living and helping them to live as men called to the service of a great cause and worthy of their calling.

FOURTEENTH PAPER

WASTE

HERE in Picardy desolation and death force upon one's thoughts a dreadful sense of unutterable waste, but it is strange how, amid all the chaos, some little thing will lie like a dead weight upon the memory, making one feel the waste far more than can greater and more important ruin.

There 's a heap of stones in Picardy. Men tell us that a village stood there once, and we still call it by its name. Yet, I cannot feel the waste, for there 's not a house to see, nor wall for shelter left ; there 's so little there to show.

There 's a field in Picardy where crops and flowers grew. Many shells have ploughed it, many lives have watered it. All is desolation now, yet I cannot feel its past nor what is wasted there.

There 's a grave in Picardy where lies the body

of my friend. We had great hopes for him, and our hopes lie buried in his grave. Yet, there 's a broken tomb in Jewry which in time will heal my hurt, for I know that God will use my friend, and that in his death there is no waste at all.

But there 's a house I know outside a market town, and that 's the place that rends my heart and bids me weep for waste. One single shell has fallen and stripped its front wall clear. All the rooms stand perfect. There 's nothing there of beauty, it 's a simple bourgeois home. On the walls are pictures, in friendly homelike frames, and in the first floor bedroom, which stands open to the wind, some one's bed stands ready, neatly made and turned. A book, but little dusty, is on the table by its side, and three photographs are on the shelf above the unlit fire. A rosary and crucifix are still hanging on the wall. Some one lived and loved there such a little while ago. It has a garden, nothing great or grand, but some one spent his evenings there and some one worked there well, for still beside the broken wall a patient rose tree grows, and still between the fallen bricks some garden flowers

peep. It was some one's resthouse, it was some one's pride and joy. And now, it 's all a ruin, and some one's work is wasted and some one's heart is sad. And that 's the place that rends my heart and bids me weep for waste.

FIFTEENTH PAPER

THE SOLDIER'S CHARACTER

1. *Its Foundations*

THERE is no character which has, at the same time, so puzzled and amazed the world as that of the British soldier. That strange mixed character, with its gaps and its unevennesses, and its extraordinary loveableness. The German has learnt that, as applied to it, the epithet contemptible is utterly inappropriate. The French civilian contemplates it with affectionate bewilderment. The British nation watches it with grateful and almost reverent admiration. 'The men are splendid,' that verdict is now almost universally endorsed, and it is not my purpose to attempt any analysis of a character which has become familiar to us all. We have all of us seen or read of the men's unconquerable cheerfulness, of their kindly generosity alike to friend and foe, of their endurance for long periods

of almost intolerable conditions, in dirt, discomfort and in danger.

My object, rather, is in this paper to try to form some estimate (so far as it is possible to generalise) of the foundations upon which it rests, the basis upon which it is built; and in the next to consider how these foundations can best be secured and strengthened. (The metaphor of building, though it is difficult to avoid, is not altogether appropriate; because this character, which we are considering, is not the result of conscious acts or deliberate purpose, but, like Topsy, has 'just growed.')

First, it must be frankly acknowledged by every impartial observer that this character of theirs is not based upon any conscious allegiance to the revealed religion of the Incarnate Christ. There are, of course, not a few, who would admit that they owe everything to their religion; nor must the influence of Christian homes and of a consciously Christian environment be underrated. But, from a generalisation, which is concerned with the basis of the character of the majority, conscious Christianity must, however regretfully, be left almost entirely out of account.

So far as I am able to analyse it, it would seem that the character which, in spite of its gaps and faults, we all admire to-day is based in the main on four foundations: (1) A belief in God; (2) devotion to a cause which over-rides self-interest; (3) the discipline of the Army; (4) a strong sense of comradeship.

(1) Some sort of a belief in God seems almost universal. The atheism of the nineteenth century was a spent force even before the war, and for those who, in these latter days, have gone down into the deep waters of tragedy and suffering, and have seen there the wonders of the Lord, it has now no meaning at all. Agnosticism I have met, but not very often, and then chiefly among the older men who have drunk of the thin wine of certain nineteenth-century writers still further diluted through popular magazines. The soldier's belief in God is often expressed in language which, intellectually, is fatalistic. 'You won't get hit unless the bullet has your name on it.' 'Either your number is up or it isn't—so don't worry yourself.' If this be fatalism, it is only so in the purely intellectual sphere, and that is a sphere in which the ordinary soldier soon gets out of his

depth. Even for the trained intellect, the line between fatalism and a trustful belief in an all-protecting Providence is not easy to draw. Certainly this intellectual fatalism, if fatalism it be, does not have the effects upon conduct which logically it should. It gives the same calm and courage that comes from a reasoned trust in the Fatherly providence of God, but it does not give a man the recklessness of the Dervish, still less does it prevent him from making superhuman efforts to save or to help his friends in difficulty or in danger. Both these things, reasonable precautions for yourself, and the attempt to help others, are, of course, logically incompatible with a real fatalism.

Also there is no doubt that, in the hour of danger the great majority of men pray ; it is not perhaps a very high type of prayer, it is purely individual, self-centred and inspired by fear. At one time, especially during the early stages of the war, we heard a great deal about religious revival and a new turning to prayer. There is a story that during a lull in a heavy bombardment, a man emerged from a dug-out and shouted

inquiries to a neighbouring shelter: 'You all right in there, mate?' 'Yes—so far, but some of them b—— shells come b—— close.' 'What have you been doing while it was going on?' 'Well, as a matter of fact, we 've all been saying our prayers.' 'So 've we—we 've been praying like hell.'

For myself, I have no great admiration for this emergency religion of the trenches. It is based on fear, and fear is a rapidly shifting foundation. Such a religion, strong in the front line, is apt to grow weaker in support, almost to evaporate in billets, and to vanish altogether on a week's leave. A generation ago, preachers used to seek to cow their hearers into virtue by lurid emphasis upon the terrors of hell. Fear may of course sometimes be the first motive turning a man away from vice and towards God, and as such, it has its value, but I cannot believe that a religion in which fear plays a large part can be very acceptable to God, whether that fear be the fear of hell or the fear of shells.

Hell fire and shell fire are alike impossible as the sole or chief foundation for the religion of

Love. But still, there they are, these emergency prayers, these petitions of the trenches, and for what they are worth they are some evidence of the men's belief in God, some proof that they are not at any rate consistent fatalists.

It is all a strange medley, illogical, English ; if you judge the men by their words alone, you would be bound to admit that the majority are purely fatalistic ; but if you form your opinion on all the facts, their words, their acts, and also take into account their environment and upbringing, you are justified in the conclusion that one of the four foundations of their character is a very real, if somewhat vague and indefinite, belief in God.

(2) Devotion to a cause that outweighs and overrides the claims of self-interest. This I should myself put down as the main cause of the great uplift that has been given to men's characters in these last two years of war. It is perhaps difficult for men of leisure and education to realise how inevitably self-interest is bound to dominate the lives of those for whom the struggle for existence is a daily reality. And now for

two years, the service of a great cause has been consciously and deliberately the dominating motive of these men's lives. We do not talk much of patriotism. After the first few weeks we even abandoned the singing of patriotic songs. The cynic tells us that the gods gave to man the gift of speech that he might have something wherewith to disguise his thoughts. It is certainly true that the British soldier uses song to hide his feelings. 'A Little Bit of Heaven' is the most popular of sentimental songs out here, and I myself heard Ireland twice so described in the very week during which Sinn Fein was making it a very passable imitation of hell. In peace time, when patriotism had for us no meaning, we shouted ourselves hoarse over the chorus of Jingo lays, but now that England has for us, at last, a meaning, we sing for preference such songs as 'Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, and smile, smile, smile,' or else songs which have in them no sense at all. We do not sing or speak of patriotism, perhaps we do not think much about it, certainly we do not personify England as the Frenchman with ardent devotion personifies and idealises 'La Patrie'; but many a man has

a real sense of uplift in his life from the consciousness that all his efforts are directed not to his own personal advantage, but to the welfare of something greater than himself, the progress of a great cause—the cause of England.

(3) The third really important basis of the soldier's character is to be found in the discipline of the Army. Many writers have commented upon the lasting effects which must result from having the nation for a few years in arms and under discipline. If you were to ask a man of a journalistic habit of mind about soldiers and their religion, he would probably talk to you about the Angels of Mons—or about crucifixes untouched in ruined houses or some such triviality, but if he was concerned with lasting effects, rather than with the sensation of the moment, he would probably agree that the most vital moral and religious effects were to be looked for from the new learnt lessons of discipline and order. To that opinion I should myself assent, but with an important reservation. Nothing that has occurred has in any way shaken the marked individuality of the British character. The ordinary soldier sees the necessity—for war pur-

poses—of the whole system of the disciplinary hierarchy ; he may grumble volubly at particular instances and particular exponents of Army discipline, but he sees its present value. At the same time he does not like it. There is no complaint that the chaplain hears more often than that there are too many bosses. There is nothing that makes the man enlisted ' for the duration ' more anxious for the return to civil life. And so, if lasting effects are to be looked for from the discipline of the Army, it will not be because the soldier has learnt to recognise its abiding value and importance. Its effects, which are strong now, and must surely be lasting, will be for the most part subconscious.

(4) The fourth foundation of the soldier's character is what perhaps most strikes the casual observer. The comradeship and the brotherhood of the Army. Here again it is difficult for those who have been brought up in the atmosphere of a public school and university to realise how new a thing this is, and how Ishmaelite is the life of a working boy and man in England. The elementary school, with some honourable exceptions, provides but little training in the idea

of fellowship. Tale-bearing and other blankly individualistic vices are still encouraged by many school teachers; and even such training in the community life as the elementary school provides comes to an end when the boy is fourteen. He is launched on the individual struggle for his bread and butter at the age when his more fortunate brother is just beginning the really important part of his education in the art of fellowship, his initiation into the meaning of *esprit de corps* and the public school spirit. It is only in his trade union and in similar societies that, in modern England, the workman has had some foretaste of those ideals of fellowship which in the Army he is so happily learning afresh. Is it some heritage from man's primaeval curse that even fellowship—love itself—can only be consolidated by common hate? The welding force in the trade union movement is found in common opposition to the employing class, and at home, that common opposition is in the foreground of men's thoughts, and it is that which most binds them together. Of course it is true that it is common opposition to the Germans which has, quite literally, brought men together

out here. But in this case, the common opposition is much less in the foreground. There is among Englishmen, whose homes have not been invaded and whose women have not been wronged, little or no sense of personal injury. It is these things that lend bitterness to French and Belgian feelings, just as it is the sense of personal injury that stirs the mind of the underpaid workman or the over-rented cottager. Out here, our opposition to a common foe, though it governs our every act and orders the course of all our daily lives, has but little effect upon our inner minds, and so the tree of fellowship is able to grow and flourish exceedingly. The men realise as they never have realised before their mutual interdependence. Their helpfulness and kindliness to one another have become proverbial. There is a real brotherhood too between officers and men which must surely react on the social relationship of the future ; after such an experience we can never go back to the blind class divisions and hatred of the past. The boy officer takes an almost motherly interest and pride in his platoon, and in most cases the men return his affection. The company commander and, in a

lesser degree, officers of higher rank share with the men a common keenness for the honour of the units to which they belong. But we have advanced a further stage in the art of fellowship, for, while at home philosophers and thinkers have been wrangling as to the meaning of the divine command 'Love your enemies,' out here the soldier seems in practice, if not in theory, to have solved the problem. If you were to suggest to any individual soldier that he loved Germans, he would probably get extremely angry and abusive. Certainly his love, if love it be, will not make him less vigorous a fighter. In a 'scrap' you will see little or no signs of anything of the sort; but watch him an hour afterwards with a German who is wounded or a prisoner, and you will see a kindness and a considerateness which it is impossible to exaggerate. More remarkable even than his treatment of the wounded or the prisoners is the soldier's lack of prejudice against those who are still fighting and still trying to kill him. He shows a detached power of understanding and even to some extent of sympathising with 'Old Fritz' which is surely unique in the annals of war.

The fellowship of the Army is a real and wonderful thing, and though, in a sense, it ought to be described as a result—a fruit of character—yet, in another sense, we are, I think, entitled to claim for it a place among the four foundations from which has grown the character of the British soldier as we know and love him to-day.

SIXTEENTH PAPER

THE SOLDIER'S CHARACTER

II. *How are these Foundations to be Preserved and Strengthened?*

SUCH, I believe, are the four foundations upon which has grown the character of the British soldier as we see and marvel at it to-day. Belief in God. The sense of service to something greater than self. The discipline of the Army. The feeling of comradeship and brotherhood. Each one of these four things is, to some extent, dependent upon the special circumstances of the times, and if the foundations are insecure the character which has grown from them will not be strong or stable enough to resist the inevitable reaction in the coming days of peace. The problem, therefore, which confronts us, is how are these foundations to be made secure and, where necessary, strengthened. To the Christian the answer is clear. We have long

ago abandoned the method of evangelisation which ignored all natural virtues and sought to begin again on new foundations. In religion, as in other things, the educational principle 'From the known to the unknown' holds sway. The fullness of the Christian character can only be reached by deepening and strengthening that which is already there, and so we want to take hold of all that there is of natural goodness in men's characters and show them how in Christ—and only in Christ—is to be sought the crown and completeness of all that they most admire.

(1) Belief in God, though it is very real, is in most men's minds extraordinarily vague and indefinite; it is dependent too, in most cases, or at any rate it is dependent for its activity, upon the sense of need and danger. How is that belief to be maintained as an active, operative influence in men's lives when all obvious danger has gone past? For my own part, I do not see how in this bewildering, tragic, puzzling world of ours such a belief can be permanently maintained unless it is crystallised and made definite in Christ as the revelation of the character of God. 'He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.'

Take, for instance, the sort of problems that the men bring up when they have so far overcome their shyness and reserve as to have a talk with the 'Padre.' I am not thinking of formal discussions in Church huts or of regular debates, but of the kind of talk one gets watching a football match, outside the canteen, walking round the trenches, or sitting beside a camp-fire at night. Here are some samples:

(*a*) 'Why does God allow all this suffering to go on so long, when, if as you say He is Almighty, He could stop it at once; above all, why does He allow such a lot of people who aren't to blame to suffer most?' Such is the question which is being asked by thousands of people in the ranks, and at home. It is not perhaps surprising that men, thinking perhaps for the first time, advance such questions as though they were a new problem raised by the war. Death and bereavement on a vast scale have brought before even the dullest and most limited imaginations the age-long problem of suffering, which has exercised thought since thought began. You cannot perhaps expect men to see that, however different it be in the realm of imagination, intellectually

it in no way differs from the problem which is raised when one small child is run over in the streets of London. How are such questions to be effectually answered ?

Disquisitions upon free will, and the argument that the failure is not the failure of God or of Christianity, but due to man's misuse of God's gifts may possibly convince the head, but they do not satisfy. You may point out that the world which God made is organised and governed as though God did not exist; that international affairs are conducted with no reference at all to His revealed will, that our social relationships are little in accordance with His teaching, that our private lives are very far from reaching to His standard. You may argue that the present world disaster is proof of the failure of all else but God, but that in man which is more important than his head will only be satisfied if you turn his attention not to argument and philosophy, but to the plain record of the Gospel story. The world suffers, but God is no absent spectator—above, beyond, serene, but in it, of it, down in the depths of its suffering and its woe. God Himself upon the Cross.

(*b*) Consider another question which is frequently discussed in billets or on country walks behind the lines. 'How can God hear our prayers when Germans and Austrians are praying to Him for their own victory? It is the same God.' 'What is the use of praying for the victory of what we believe to be right when our enemies are just as convinced of the rightness of their cause, and are praying to the same God for its success?' That is a question with which, in one form or another, one is constantly faced, and apart from Revelation, I cannot see that there can be any satisfactory answer. If the will of God is merely a matter of opinion, no single individual can have great confidence that his own prayers are more worth while than the prayers of some one else who is offering them with a precisely contrary intent. But for those who believe in Christianity, the will of God is no longer a matter of mere guesswork, and it is in no way dependent upon our imaginings. The nature and character of God has been spread out before us. In Christ, God is revealed as a person with a will of His own, a will that is ascertainable—a will that is like Christ's will. It does

not matter that hostile nations use to Him the same words and apply to Him the same titles. Prayer, however worded, however addressed, is not prayer in the name of Christ unless it is a laying of our wills in line with God's will, as that will has been revealed to us in Christ. Believing in the justice of the cause in which we fight, convinced that its triumph is in accordance with His will, the fact that others pray to Him for its defeat will disturb us not at all. Our task it is to keep ourselves in line with what we believe to be His purpose and His will, and therewith to be content.

(*c*) Of comparatively little importance—but perhaps worth noticing—are the larger numbers of idle and sometimes degrading superstitions which men can hold side by side with a vague belief in God. How are these to be combated ? The god of a man's imaginings may be affected by trivial things or he may be but one of many gods, powerless to control the vagaries of the lord of chance. But once we realise that the character of the Almighty is ascertainable, if once we have a clear grasp of the truth that he that hath seen Christ hath seen the Father, that

God is like Christ, we shall understand that He who, in character, is like Christ will not punish a man for sitting down thirteen to his dinner or for being the third to light his fag from the same match. It is fashionable in these days to decry theology, but a sound theology among other advantages has the great merit of being incompatible with superstition. The superstitious man must be either a polytheist or a devil worshipper, or, more probably, just a fool.

(*d*) To turn to matters more important, though a mere vague belief in God may and often does enable a man to face his own death bravely, and to stand unmoved amid scenes of carnage and bloodshed, it will not help him much by the graveside of those whom he really loves. I remember well in the ward of a London hospital talking to a soldier who was dirty and travel-stained, his clothes still caked with the mud of Flanders. He had been called by telegram to the bedside of his little boy who lay dying. 'Only yesterday,' he told me there in the peace of London, 'only yesterday my mate was blown to pieces alongside of me; nearly every day I

have seen men killed and I didn't mind, I got sort of used to it, though sometimes I 've seen 'em fall by dozens from machine-gun fire—and all good pals of mine too, but when I got this telegram about my little Harry it fair broke me.' He looked, what he said he was, a broken man, and when, a few hours afterwards, the child died, what could I say to him ? What use to speak to him of theories of survival, of hopes and dreams ? The death of his child was a fact—cold and grim. Theories are but flimsy things with which to face hard facts. In face of such a fact—a man's faith, his belief in God will not stand firm unless it be supported by that other and stronger fact, the actual, literal resurrection of the Man Christ Jesus. Academic theologians live often in a world of theory ; to them no doubt their theories seem real things, and so they will not realise that men who are unaccustomed to speculation and to theories but who are constantly up against the hard facts of daily life, can only be helped by facts. And it is fact—which the simple straightforward Gospel of the Resurrection offers to the bereaved and to the broken-hearted. It is that fact which more than

anything else will help such men to maintain and keep alive their belief in God.

Such are some of the problems and difficulties which tend to undermine in men their belief in God. If that belief be one of the four essential foundations of the character which we all wish to preserve and strengthen, we must find some means by which that belief can be maintained against all such undermining. To us Christians it seems that this can best be done by crystallising their vague belief in a power above them into a precise and definite belief in Christ revealed as God Incarnate.

(2) As the second main foundation of the soldier's character I have claimed the conviction that they are serving a cause, a something greater than themselves. The cause of England, of civilisation, of freedom, or as the soldier, with his strong instinct for immediate present realities, would probably put it, the cause of beating the Boche. How, when the victory has been won and that cause has no longer any obvious claim upon his services, how is the uplifting sense of living for something greater than self-interest to be lastingly maintained ?

What cause can be more inspiring and ennobling than the cause of Christ ? We have got to get rid of the idea of religion as concerned only or primarily with a selfish individual salvation, as a short cut to heaven, or a fire insurance against hell. All the experience of recent years should have impressed upon us the vital importance of shifting the emphasis of our teaching from the individual to the corporate. The strength of fellowship movements in the world of labour, the proved failure of individualistic sectarianism, the unexpected power (even in the modern commercially-linked-up world) of the claim of nationality, alike tend to show that the call to serve a corporate ideal evokes all that is best in those to whom it is made. We have got to get away from the individualistic and characteristically British conception of religion to the primitive catholic teaching of Jesus Christ, who before all things was One who came to found a society, a kingdom. His sacraments and His verbal teaching are alike essentially social. Love and service of the brethren come first, individual salvation is attainable only in and through such love and service. To be a Christian means to be

a worker for the greatest of all causes, the cause of Christ and the coming of His Kingdom. It is the greatest of all causes and also the most enduring, for its claims upon its servants cannot cease till the Lord's prayer is answered and His Kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven, till the kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. Great causes do not, however, as a rule appeal strongly to men's hearts unless with loyalty to a cause there is coupled personal devotion to a leader. Even the best of causes lacks magnetic power unless associated with personality. History and politics teach the same lesson. Dynastic quarrels have often plunged the world in sorrow, but at the same time they have called out in men some of the noblest qualities of chivalry and devotion ; and even in modern politics nearly every great cause has been indestructibly associated with the name of its champion and leader. In recent history there has been no greater, nor more inspiring heroism than that displayed by the men of the Italian risings and wars of liberation. They had a great cause—the freeing and reuniting of a historic nation, long enslaved

and long dismembered, but the allegiance of the men of Italy to that great cause was undoubtedly held firm by their personal devotion to a few leaders, men of outstanding personality, Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi, and Victor Emmanuel the King.

This present war has been on so vast a scale that it has been almost too big for loyalties such as this ; but even so, the name of Lord Kitchener has been a name of magic and at any rate to the new armies has supplied something of the force which comes from personal devotion ; and those who witnessed the reception given to the King, when he visited the troops in Picardy, were deeply impressed with the exuberant display of personal loyalty. But for the most part in this war, this necessary element has been supplied in closer and more intimate ways. The battalion commanders, the company officers, and, most intimately of all, the platoon leaders, have in countless cases been able to win from their men a whole-hearted personal devotion ; a blend of affection and of confidence. Whether it be on a large or small scale, it is personality that counts, it is personality that in most men

inspires an allegiance far stronger than they would accord to a mere abstract cause. The cause of Belgium moved us all, but it was the presence of the homeless Belgians in our midst that really affected us. In almost the last essay that he wrote, published in the *Times Literary Supplement* after his death, Henry James told us how one individual Belgian woman walking sadly down the main street of Rye in Sussex, became to him the symbol of all the sorrow of the war, and inspired him to the heroic labours of that last year of his life. The care of the wounded is a cause and a responsibility of national obligation, but it is the sight in our streets of the maimed men in blue that moves men's hearts.

If this personal element is essential in political and military causes such as these, we must not leave it out when appealing to men for service in the greater cause. Here the Christian Church should have no difficulty, for it is of the essence of her message that Christianity involves personal allegiance to a leader. In so great a cause Christ is an ideal leader, inspiring confidence by His victories over sin and death : ' Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world' : evoking love by His

sorrows and His suffering : ' I, if I be lifted up, will draw all Men unto me.' The appeal of the wounded men who have suffered in the great cause of England is irresistible, because it is the appeal of the actual living men in blue visible in our streets. The appeal of the leader in the Eternal Cause is the appeal of one who was wounded on the battlefield of Calvary and who, though invisible, still lives and, in the sufferings of His followers, suffers still.

But it is not enough that in the Captain of our Salvation we have the ideal leader ; something of the personal element must be supplied by those whom He has commissioned to be officers in His cause. In English parochial life the clergy are, as a rule, leaders in organisation and in externals ; but on deeper levels there is tragic truth in the caricature which always depicts the parson as the soul of conservative convention. We want more of the spirit of enterprise and of leadership in the things of the mind. Men look for it and expect it. Army life has accustomed them, more than ever before, to the ideas of leadership, and it is to the clergy that in the coming years we must look for a spirit of adventure which

hitherto has been so lacking in their ranks. But a leader must be one who inspires confidence, and that means that he must be a man of thought and of independence—qualities which are rare in isolation, and in conjunction still more difficult to find. He must also be one who inspires love—and it is only of self-sacrifice that love is born.

Above all, if this sense of service to a cause and to leaders, which is so potent a force in men's characters to-day, is to be maintained and transferred to the greater cause, we have got to give up entirely the mean habit of appealing to selfish motives. Politicians win support by the promises which they make. Heroes secure allegiance by their appeal for service. Peddling plans may be pushed forward by lavish rewards. Great causes can be advanced only by great sacrifices. Little men are won by bribes ; what is best in the best of men is brought out only by a great claim. Christianity professes to be the religion of the Cross, of utter unselfishness. Assent to it is asked, all too often, from motives of fear or for the sake of an individual salvation in the next world. For my own part I cannot see that selfishness is any the less selfish because its

profits are transferred from the balance of this world to the pay sheet of the world to come. The Christian preacher seeking to win men for His Master may by promises of the security of heaven attract the adhesion of the timid. If he wishes to enlist the strong and the adventurous in the great cause there is no model that would be more likely to be effective than the historic appeal of Garibaldi to the men of Rome:

'Fortune who betrays us to-day will smile on us to-morrow. I am going out from Rome. Let those who wish to continue the war against the stranger come with me. I offer neither pay, nor quarters, nor provisions. I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles, and death. Let him who loves his country in his heart and not with his lips only follow me.'

(3) It is when we come to face the third main foundation of the soldier's character—the discipline of the Army—that we are faced with the most difficult problem for the future. There can, I think, be no doubt of the value that has accrued to men through their temporary submission to a rigid discipline. At the same time

probably every one who has had at all intimate relations with our troops in France would agree that discipline is as little liked as ever. It is quite certain that men will not, as a result of what they have learnt here in war, submit gladly to some similar authority in peace time at home.[1] Quite apart from the inevitable temporary reaction (a reaction which may well set towards something beyond liberty), it is certain that the engrained English desire for freedom has received no set-back, nor even check. The soldier's experience of the sergeant and the corporal has not increased his love for the inspector or the supervisor. What he has learnt of the value of discipline may possibly affect his upbringing of his family. We shall perhaps hear less of children of twelve years who are beyond their parents' control. The soldier will visit on his son —to his son's great gain—what he has himself suffered from the sergeant, but, for himself, he will never willingly accept an external authority similar in kind to that of the military hierarchy.

There is no danger at all that we shall break German militarism in war, only to succumb to it

[1] See this point more fully discussed in the Fourth Paper.

ourselves in peace. Freedom is the very object of the war, but to attain it we have had to submit to large curtailments of our liberty. Laws have been passed by acclamation, which, a little while ago, would have aroused the most passionate opposition. To the Christian the paradox will cause no surprise. It is the law of sacrifice in working. It is the surrender of the less for the sake of the greater, of the present for the enduring. It is the loss of temporary freedom for the sake of the larger liberty of the future. But quite apart from its immediate necessity, there is, of course, in discipline a real character value. Many a ragged life has been stiffened ; many a man and many a woman has become both happier and better in these years of war. How can this thing of value be preserved in the coming years of peace ? It is certain that except for immediate and temporary ends, men will not again place themselves under the authority of another, will not again surrender their freedom. And yet, to reach his best, a man must submit to discipline. How can discipline and freedom, authority and liberty be harmonised ? Here surely is a great opportunity for the Church of

Christ: for Christ alone holds the key. The Christian is free and royal, yet before all things he is a man under authority. He is 'bought with a price'—the slave of his Lord. S. James, who is content at the opening of his Epistle to describe himself as the bond-servant of Jesus Christ, speaks more than once of a royal law, a law of liberty. The Christian is a servant, yet free and royal, because his service is voluntary and offered in the spirit of the Royal Son of Man, who Himself came not to be ministered unto but to minister. He is under authority, but it is the authority of Him in whose service is perfect freedom, of Him 'cui servire regnare est.' The Christian law is law, binding and authoritative, but it is a royal law because its authority is within the self and in the sphere of conscience. It is law, strict and all embracing, but it is a law of liberty, because it is accepted of a man's own free choice, a choice which is truly free, not like that of the voluntary soldier, once made and irrevocable, but a choice daily and hourly renewed.

Freedom and discipline are both necessary to human greatness. Freedom we have for the

time being surrendered, but freedom we shall inevitably regain. The love of it is too deeply engrained in the English nature, the price that has been paid for it is too heavy, for the surrender to be permanent. Discipline we have for the time being attained, but with equal certainty we shall lose it again unless we reach it in a new form, a form which is independent of the drill sergeant or of any external authority, a form with which only an inner and spiritual religion can provide us.[1]

(4) But what of the fellowship which plays so large a part in Army life, and which is so important among the foundation things of the soldier's character? How can this be maintained in the coming days of peace? Must we return to the selfish individualism of the past? Is there anything which will help us to carry over

[1] I have spoken here of the discipline which is the result of submission of the individual will to the authority of Christ. Further questions as to the discipline and authority of Christ's Church are inevitably involved. This is not the type of book in which to consider such questions, but obviously, if the Church of England is to use her opportunity, she must make clearer than she has yet done the extent and limits of her claim to authority, and equally, if men are to attain that real freedom which can only be reached through discipline, they must be prepared to acknowledge and obey some form of Church authority.

into civil life the lessons that we have learnt here in the Army ? What bond is there strong enough to give that uniting force which the regiment and the common cause have hitherto supplied ?

An answer to these questions is not easy, and yet to find one is of vital importance, for, undoubtedly, this brotherhood, this comradeship of the Army has been an immensely important factor, and is responsible for much that is of the utmost value. To live in fellowship one with another is no easy thing. It is a high and difficult art. Our education in it proceeds normally in ever expanding circles. First the baby has to learn that its primordial instincts have to be satisfied with some reference to the convenience of other people. Then the child has to learn the give and take of family life. Then comes the wider world of school. The fact that the only child takes longer to settle down in school surroundings is due, of course, to the fact that he has not had the same opportunities of learning the earlier lesson. But our education in the art of fellowship becomes higher grade, not only by reason of the increased numbers with whom we are brought into contact, but also

when we come into relationship with people of different upbringing, outlook, and environment. The young man at the university may seem to have a genius for friendship and fellowship, but he has yet to learn the harder lesson of how to live in fellowship with men of a different class and of a wholly different standpoint. The young workman may be a zealous member of his friendly society and his union, but may yet be very far from having mastered the harder task of how to live in fellowship with men of the employing class. Out here, in France, we have been learning fellowship in a very large school and among men of all types. Not only in the ranks, but in officers' messes men of very widely differing education and upbringing have been brought much together. Not only have we in the Army been learning, but at home people have been brought nearer to each other than ever before. Shall we have profited by our training? Are we ready for a yet more advanced lesson in this noblest of all arts, the art of fellowship? We want something that is wider than the comradeship of the Army, wider than the brotherhood of the nation. Where is the catholic ideal

to be found—where is the dream of a universal brotherhood to be achieved? The Church of Christ should supply us with what we need, but it is just here (let us humbly confess it) that we have most conspicuously failed. First there are the divisions between the great branches of the Church. Here in a little village in Picardy, where I am writing these lines, an allied nation has put everything at our disposal. Houses, fields, barns, are ours for the asking. Yesterday I had arranged in an open field for a service of commemoration for those who had given their lives in the recent fighting. Yesterday it rained, but I could not have the use of the village church, though it was unoccupied and its curé had gone to the wars. That alone was denied to me. The pity of it, the pity and the shame of it! And this is the society whose ambition is to unite the world. But there is a lack of fellowship everywhere, not only between the various branches of the One Society. Within our own English Church, the various schools of thought quarrel and protest, and even within the limits of single congregations there are squabbles, cliques, and lack of friendliness. Here is the supreme need

of repentance and reform. There is much talk of alterations in our Prayer Book, of brightening our services, and of Church reform: with such proposals I am myself in entire sympathy, but there is a very real danger lest our reforming zeal should be directed overmuch to things such as these, which are, after all, but superficial remedies. What will all these things avail, if men see that the Church of Christ shows to them less, and not more of brotherhood than they can see in other societies outside her borders? Men will not turn to the organised Church of Christ while, in her life, she gives the lie to this essential principle of her being. But while our new grasp of the ideal of fellowship fills us churchmen with bitterness and shame for the past and also for the present, at the same time it gives us ground for the highest hopes for the future. We want fellowship, we see its value, we want a fellowship strong enough to overcome the dividing barriers of sex and class and nationality, and it is only in a common allegiance to the Universal Christ, the One Master of us all that we can hope to find it. In Him alone is there any hope of a united world. We want fellowship—and to-day many of us are

realising with a terrible intensity that we want the widest possible fellowship, one which is not bounded by the confines of this earth; we want fellowship with the hundreds who have gone on in the fullness of their vigour. Here again, the Church and the Church alone, can supply the need. Her doctrines of the endless life and of the Communion of Saints assure the bereaved of our common membership in the one Eternal Christ, their Master there as He is ours here.

The comradeship of the Army, that is one of the greatest, perhaps the greatest force in the formation of the character of our soldiers, and again it is only in Christ that this new-found sense of fellowship can be maintained and completed. Some few are realising this already, as, for instance, the private soldier, who, in a letter home wrote these words: 'Out here,' he wrote, 'we have found God, for we have given up our narrow self-centred lives, and found love for one another, and God is Love.' It is along the lines of fellowship that I am myself most hopeful of religious growth. S. John's Epistle seems charged with new meaning out here, and we are understanding afresh the meaning of his teaching

that love towards God can only be shown by love towards the brethren. The letter which I have just quoted shows that some men are seeing a definite religious value in the companionship and brotherhood of their life in the Army. Such a letter is perhaps not typical, and it comes from a man more thoughtful than most—but there is much evidence of the desire to find religious expression for the wider fellowship. No services are more willingly attended, none make a deeper impression than the services of commemoration which nearly all chaplains try to arrange at the first available moment after their battalion or brigade has been in action. Even those who would not ordinarily regard themselves as religious and who do not usually attend voluntary services, seem then to feel the need of a religious expression for the sentiments of regret, affection, and respect which can find satisfaction in no other outlet.

. . . . . .

What then are the prospects for the future religion of England? If we are to judge by the churchgoing and professed Christianity of the Army, none but a blind and wilful optimist can

deny that the prospects are gloomy in the extreme. If, however, we shift our emphasis a little, and try to leave behind any preconceived ideas, we see in the manhood of England[1] a character which we all admire, and which, in spite of its gaps and faults, moves many of us professing Christians to penitence and shame. That character has grown from four foundations: Belief in God ; the sense of serving a great cause ; the discipline of the Army ; the brotherhood of soldiering. The Christian, when he realises that all these four foundation things find their crown and completion only in Christ, will, if he be a man of long sight, be both glad and hopeful.

[1] This book deals with soldiers, but I make no apology for my generalisation, for the Army represents no longer a special class, Tommy Atkins, but is John Bull in khaki.

SEVENTEENTH PAPER

A CONFESSION AND A CLAIM

READERS of these papers (VII-XVII) will have traced in them a strong recognition of the natural goodness which war has produced or evolved in our soldiers. My appreciation of the deep inarticulate Christianity of the men with whom I have come into contact fills me with hope for the future. At the same time I cannot disguise from myself that the formal acceptance of Christianity has sometimes results which are far from satisfactory in the present. It seems sometimes to brush all the fresh bloom off the natural goodness and to be followed by a blight of self-righteousness and criticism. These two facts taken together have at times led me to grave doubts as to the value of our specific work as chaplains. My conviction that the Church ideal, the common allegiance to the One Master, is the only solution of the world's divisions, has

never for an instant wavered. The tragedy and chaos of these years has daily intensified it. The facts of experience have however at times led to doubts as to the value of work with individuals, a haunting fear lest we should incur the condemnation uttered by the Lord upon the Pharisees. 'Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when ye have found him ye make him tenfold more a child of hell than yourselves.' Such thoughts have led to a feeling of bewilderment, a doubt as to whether in the present state of the Church one was really doing the Lord's work in seeking to bring men into her fellowship. We want them to see the Christ, too often I have felt that we only stand in their light. That is my confession, and as soon as it is made I would withdraw it, and point out the fallacy which should all along have been obvious enough. It is, of course, only by drawing the best into the Church that we can hope for that reform and revivication which, if it is to be lasting, must come from within, and it is only by Christian individuals that the ideal of the corporate whole can be achieved. Our work then as chaplains is threefold, to provide services and spiritual

ministrations for those who are already faithful sons of the Church, to seek to bring others into the great Society, and to help men in their struggles against vice and temptation. It is in this last that the power of definite, articulate churchmanship is most evident. Young men, living an unnatural life, under war conditions, have one or two temptations, against which the struggle is extraordinarily difficult. I do not say that every definite churchman stands upright, still less that every inarticulate Christian falls, but I am quite sure that this is just one of the things in which definite profession of allegiance to Christ gives a strength which a vague inarticulate Christianity is powerless to provide.

The world is in travail. The Church does not stand outside critical and serene. The Church is in the world and suffers with the world. She suffers; and to suffer is to learn. Most certainly those of her officers who have served as chaplains are humbler men than they were three years ago. We have seen not only our own individual weaknesses and failures, but we see also that the Church, as she exists to-day, does not yet meet the needs of men.

We are humbled, but also we are hopeful. There has been, in these years of war, an enormous shifting of values. We have come to see that the things that matter are not comfort, pleasure, money, or success, but courage, service, sacrifice, and enterprise. We are much nearer than we were to the system of values which Christ taught. The gains are real, therefore we are hopeful ; but they need securing, therefore we are anxious. They will not consolidate themselves.

Because the world is in ruins, because all else but Christ has failed, we are confident that the society which has in her the spirit of the Christ must succeed. Christ is the Saviour of the world, not merely of the individual ; before His Church, therefore, lies the great opportunity of the coming years, but she needs men through whom to seize it. She needs men for all branches of her work, but before all things just now she needs men, and the right men, as her ordained officers. She needs the sort of men who have shown, in this war, the gift of leadership—the successful young company commander and platoon leader. These are the men we want. They do not come in any numbers. Why ? In

part, perhaps, because the career of an English parson does not seem to offer them the opportunities of a man's life, or of activities worthy of their best energies. The round of parochial business does not attract them. It does not seem worth while. Perhaps it is not. But the future is tremendously worth while.

When the Apostles went out into the world to gather men into the fellowship, they were not thinking only of the handful of men and women in Jerusalem then ; they were thinking of the world-wide catholic fellowship that was to be. When the makers of modern Italy called men to the most heroic enterprise in history, they were not thinking of the backward, broken, dismembered states that then were Italy—but of the freed, united, triumphant Italy of their dreams.

So we, when we call for men to serve the Church to-day, we are not thinking of the Church of England as we have known it in the past, we are not thinking of her often trumpery and trifling activities in the present ; but of the glorious opportunity that lies before her of doing what she alone can do for the refashioning of a broken, ruined world. A man's work.

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